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**‘I’m a professional businessman not a professional Pakistani’: Media Representation of
South Asian Businessmen in Thatcherite Britain, 1979-1990.**

William Alexander Awad

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements for
award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts, December 2018.

Word Count: 24,847

Abstract

This thesis explores the representation of South Asian businessmen in the British media from 1979-1990. It uses local and national newspapers, as well as film and television, to explore changing portrayals of the businessmen in an era of noticeable political, economic and social change. Between 1979-1990, the British media presented South Asian businessmen in a plethora of complex relationships with prevailing Thatcherite visions of middle-classness. However, despite identifying South Asian engagement with the Thatcherite ideals of home-ownership, entrepreneurialism and active citizenship, the media continued to deny the diaspora an image as fully accepted within the middle-class. Portrayals of the businessmen that did link them to the Thatcherite ideology also suggested they had become disconnected from their community. This presentation of South Asian businessmen extended to their portrayal in relation to the business masculinities of Thatcherite Britain. The media depicted the businessmen as engaging with, but not assimilated into, the masculinities. These gendered identities remained connected to whiteness and Britishness, again suggesting the businessmen had moved away from their community. The media's depiction of the businessmen encouraged a portrayal of them as a model minority. This simultaneously distanced Britain's black community from notions of middle-classness and economic success. However, the South Asian diaspora continued to be identified as outside of mainstream business and middle-class identities. In each case, the exclusion from Thatcherite middle-classness affirmed the Thatcherite ideology as being inherently white, reasserting an implicit whiteness within British national identity. This thesis will show that existing contemporary British history overlooks racialized narratives through exploring the intersection between race, gender and class in the British media. It therefore adds to a growing literature which sees race as vital to understanding British society.

Acknowledgements:

I would firstly like to thank Dr Amy Edwards, Dr Erika Hanna and Professor Hugh Pemberton for the time and support they have given me throughout the past 15 months. Their advice and guidance has been second-to-none and their genuine care and concern for both the project and myself is testament to their stature as academics and supervisors. I also owe thanks to the archives and libraries I visited during this research process: The Library of Birmingham and the Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham. Although the materials gathered from these visits went unused in the final thesis, the research visits to these institutions were formative and vital to the project's development. I would like to thank my parents, Julia and Reda, for the support they have given me throughout my studies. Thanks to all the Senior Resident and staff team in Manor Hall whom journeyed with me through highs and lows, and to those in the Arts PGR community at the University of Bristol who welcomed me, supported me and helped me enjoy my time in research. A thank you also goes to those who proof read drafts and sections of my work. I also owe the whole History department at the University of Bristol thanks for encouraging me to pursue this M.Phil, as well as for moulding, guiding and supporting me throughout my BA.

Finally, can I give thanks to my friends and the community at Woodlands Church and, most importantly, to God, without whom I do not think I would have had the strength, perseverance or grounding to finish this research.

For My Grandparents:

Ivan, Pauline, Soad and William

Author's declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED: DATE:.....

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List of Abbreviations

AACS	Anglo-Asian Conservative Society
CCCS	Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality
NWS	Neighbourhood Watch Schemes

Introduction

On the 6th June 1990, *The Times* reported on a fundraising dinner ‘to launch the Community Affairs Appeal of the Prince’s Youth Business Trust’.¹ £5million was raised by those at the event. What was notable about this dinner was that it was attended by South Asian businesspeople along with Prince Charles and the Aga Khan, the spiritual leader of the Ismaili Muslim community.² The report suggested that the South Asian business community was beginning to look to wider British society, whereas previously they were presented as only giving to their own diaspora. This narrative of progression indicated that South Asian businessmen were beginning to be seen as more assimilated into British society. *The Times*’ portrayal of the businessmen in 1990 was overly-simplistic. Throughout Thatcher’s Britain the media presented South Asian businessmen as positioned in an identity purgatory. They were both British and not British; Asian and not Asian. The businessmen were praised for their commitment to Thatcherism and yet removed from Thatcherite visions of middle-classness through racist attitudes and narratives. Newspapers held South Asian businessmen up as the example of the enterprising minority but still kept them at arm’s length. The dual identity that South Asian businessmen were assigned by the press allowed them to present contradictory narratives of the community. With these inconsistencies came a stereotype of the “successful South Asian” and an onslaught of contradictions which placed the businessmen in between an identity as included and excluded from Thatcherite middle-classness.

Along with newspapers, other media sources were beginning to explore these contradictions. Hanif Kureishi’s adapted play, *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985), followed the story of a British Pakistani Omar (Gordon Warnecke) and his white punk friend/lover Johnny (Daniel Day-Lewis) as they open a laundrette and negotiated issues of race, class and sexuality, with the pair entering into a relationship. The film presented South Asian businessmen as occupying a distinctly Thatcherite identity.³ The Channel 4 show *Tandoori Nights* (Season 1 aired in 1985, Season 2 in 1987) took a more light-hearted approach to the subject, but equally explored life as a South Asian businessman. The sitcom was based around the life of Jimmy Sharma (Saeed Jaffrey), the owner of the upmarket Indian restaurant, the Jewel in the Crown, and his family. Again, the show engaged with the tension that South Asian businessmen faced

¹ Naseem Khan, ‘Asian accent on generosity’, *The Times*, 6 June 1990, p. 18.

² Naseem Khan, ‘Asian accent on generosity’, *The Times*, 6 June 1990, p. 18; ‘Frequently Asked Questions’, *Aga Khan Foundation* <<https://www.akf.org.uk/about-us/faqs/>> [accessed 30 October 2018].

³ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears, (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

and their confused public identity, acknowledging that Jimmy was both very anglicised but also engaged with his cultural heritage, often in times of difficulty or when faced with a moral dilemma.⁴ In both cases, the on screen representation of South Asian businessmen engaged with the dual nature of their identity, albeit in different ways, making the two productions useful case studies for looking at wider representations of South Asian businessmen in the media.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s there was little focus in the media on the South Asian community, even when stories affected them directly. As the period progressed, South Asian diasporas, and specifically South Asian businessmen, became more of an interest in the media. Although narratives were not always consistent, the general narrative from the press was that South Asian businessmen were an emerging success story. However, representations of South Asian businessmen were not always positive. The businessmen's relationship with the prevailing ideology of Thatcherism and their engagement with the masculine world of business were presented in an array of different lights. By 1990, the narrative of the successful South Asian businessman had, rightly or wrongly, been established. Despite this, the new status as the successful minority positioned the businessmen, and to some extent the wider community, in an identity which sat between the other minorities in Britain and contemporary notions of Britishness and middle-classness.

This thesis will address the changing representations of South Asian businessmen between 1979-1990. It will argue that the media positioned the businessmen as more assimilated and integrated into the British middle-classes and yet not fully accepted. I will also argue that these representations encouraged and reasserted a white racialized narrative of Britishness through the presentation of South Asian businessmen as Thatcherite and foreign. The South Asian community has faced noticeably less study than the Afro-Caribbean and African communities in Britain. This is noteworthy because the South Asian diaspora has long been Britain's largest ethnic minority group. The community made up 5.93 percent of the English and Welsh population in 2011, whereas the black community was 4.38 percent.⁵ Through studying the South Asian community a wider understanding of minority experiences and representations can be developed. Furthermore, the South Asian diaspora offer greater

⁴ *Tandoori Nights*, Channel 4, 1985, 1987 [on DVD].

⁵ Census data has a poor set of ethnic identifiers. The black community included: white mixed black African, white mixed black Caribbean, African, and Caribbean. The South Asian community includes: white mixed Asian, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi; Office for National Statistics, *Ethnic Group, Local Authorities in England and Wales*, Census Data 2011, 27 March 2011

<<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/2011censuskeystatisticsforlocalauthoritiesinenglandandwales>> [accessed 30 October 2018].

insight into the way in which British middle-classness changed during Thatcher's time in power. Understanding how the media presented South Asian businessmen's relationship to Thatcherism will help us understand both how South Asians were perceived as well as allow a greater understanding of race, class and gender in Thatcher's Britain, revealing a narrative of intersectionality between these three areas. As such, exploring the presentation of South Asian businessmen will build a more detailed picture of national identity between 1979-1990 and how the ideology of Thatcherism affected British society.

Historiography

Britain underwent significant changes during Thatcher's time in power. This has produced a vast and diverse historiography around Thatcher's Britain.⁶ Despite a broad spectrum of subjects being addressed by academics, racialized narratives within the historiographies are often missing. This trope is common across histories of contemporary Britain which has resulted in implicitly white narratives. However, this is not identified within the historiography. One example of this can be seen in Peter Clarke's, otherwise insightful, *Hope and Glory*. The discussion of immigration and minority experience within the book is largely confined to eleven pages which cover the entire post-war history of minority immigration and experience in Britain.⁷ More recent works on the history of Britain have included more on Britain's ethnic minority communities. Pat Thane's *Divided Kingdom* and James Vernon's *Modern Britain* both explore the experience of Britain's minority communities. However, in both cases these are written as histories within the history of Britain and largely focus on immigration,

⁶ *Making Thatcher's Britain*, ed. by Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Amy Edwards, "'Financial Consumerism': Citizenship, Consumerism and Capital Ownership in the 1980s", *Contemporary British History*, 31.2 (2017), 210–29; Matthew Francis, "'A Crusade to Enfranchise the Many': Thatcherism and the 'Property-Owning Democracy'", *Twentieth Century British History*, 23.2 (2012), 275–97; Matthew Francis, 'Mrs Thatcher's Peacock Blue Sari: Ethnic Minorities, Electoral Politics and the Conservative Party, c. 1974–86', *Contemporary British History*, 31.2 (2017), 274–93; Matthew Hilton, Chris Moores, and Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 'New Times Revisited: Britain in the 1980s', *Contemporary British History*, 31.2 (2017), 145–65; Jenny Bourne, "'May We Bring Harmony'?: Thatcher's Legacy on 'Race'", *Race & Class*, 55.1 (2013), 87–91; Chris Moores, 'Thatcher's Troops? Neighbourhood Watch Schemes and the Search for "ordinary" Thatcherism in 1980s Britain', *Contemporary British History*, 31.2 (2017), 230–55; Gavin Schaffer, 'Fighting Thatcher with Comedy: What to Do When There Is No Alternative', *Journal of British Studies*, 55.2 (2016), 374–97; Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 'Neo-Liberalism and Morality in the Making of Thatcherite Social Policy', *The Historical Journal*, 55.2 (2012), 497–520; Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 'Discourse of "class" in Britain in "New Times"', *Contemporary British History*, 31.2 (2017), 294–317; Paul Heelas, 'Reforming the Self: Enterprise and the Characters of Thatcherism', in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Russell Keat and Nicholas Abercrombie, Routledge Revivals edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 72–92; Aled Davis, James Freeman, and Hugh Pemberton, "'Everyman a Capitalist" or "Free to Choose"? Exploring the Tension Within Thatcherite Individualism.', *The Historical Journal*, 61.2 (2018), 477–501.

⁷ Peter Clarke, *Hope and Glory: Britain 1900-2000*, 2nd edn (London: Penguin Books, 2004), pp. 319-329.

legislation and race relations. As such, the histories of Britain's minority communities appear disjointed from wider British history, as if in their own microcosm.⁸

Histories of the Thatcher years are no exception to this and are often written with an implicitly white narrative. However, as Gavin Schaffer and Saima Nasar have noted, whiteness was complex in Britain, as shown through white minority ethnic communities such as the Irish population. As such, it is important to remember that whiteness did not mean all white people were treated equally, nor were their stories included in these white histories of Britain in the same way.⁹ Some historians have begun to address the lack of minority representation in mainstream histories. Matthew Francis' article on the Conservative Party's attempt to gain the South Asian vote begins to write histories of the South Asian community into a broader history of the Conservative Party.¹⁰ Camilla Schofield's work on the relationship between Powellism and Thatcherism also interweaves narratives of Britain's minorities into wider British history.¹¹ However, these examples are still few in number. Although Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders' *Making Thatcher's Britain*, aimed to address issues of race in Thatcher's Britain, Schofield's work stands out as an exception to the white narrative of the rest of the chapters. Other chapters that looked beyond this narrative focused on foreign policy and Stephen Howe's chapter on decolonisation was more focused on repositioning Imperial history within a British history narrative, rather than challenging the whiteness of histories of Thatcherism.¹²

In order to understand the Thatcher years and contemporary British history to a fuller extent, racialized narratives and histories are needed within mainstream British histories, not just within the histories of Britain's minorities. This thesis will contribute to the literature on Thatcher's Britain and, building on the work of Francis and Schofield, understand race and ethnicity as being essential to narratives of social and cultural change in Britain. Through exploring the representation of South Asian businessmen in the media, this research will add nuance to the understanding of how the South Asian diaspora was viewed and understood in

⁸ Pat Thane, *Divided Kingdom: A History of Britain, 1900 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 4, 9-12, 141-2, 205-7, 289-90, 339-42, 391-2, 413-414, 440-6; James Vernon, *Modern Britain: 1750 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 404-9, 441-7, 462-4, 499-500, 513-514.

⁹ Gavin Schaffer and Saima Nasar, 'The White Essential Subject: Race, Ethnicity, and the Irish in Post-War Britain', *Contemporary British History*, 32.2 (2018), 209-30.

¹⁰ Francis, 'Mrs Thatcher's Peacock Blue Sari', pp. 274-93.

¹¹ Camilla Schofield, "'A Nation or No Nation?'" Enoch Powell and Thatcherism', in *Making Thatcher's Britain*, ed. by Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 95-110.

¹² Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders, 'Introduction: Varieties of Thatcherism', in *Making Thatcher's Britain*, ed. by Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 1-21 (p.19); Stephen Howe, 'Decolonisation and Imperial AfterShock: The Thatcher Years', in *Making Thatcher's Britain*, ed. by Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 234-51 (p.235).

relation to class, gender and race, as well speak into wider historical narratives of Britain and its implicit whiteness.

Thatcherism and Class

During the Thatcher years the understanding of class underwent significant change. A debate has emerged in historiography around whether class remains a viable way of viewing society. Simon Gunn and Rachel Bell have argued that, although inequality did not end, class ceased to be a useful way of understanding Britain because of reduced difference across society. Conversely, David Cannadine has shown that the language of class continued, indicating that class identities remained prominent within British society. More recently, Jon Lawrence and Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite drew a distinct link between Thatcherism and the changing class structure, arguing that Thatcher sought to redefine the middle-class as a broader popular identity.¹³ Therefore, understanding Thatcherism is essential to understanding middle-classness and vice versa.

Arthur Marwick summaries Thatcherism's middle-class ideology as focused on enterprise culture and individualism. Thatcher's government wanted people to be free to do with their disposable income what they wished.¹⁴ However, Thatcherism extended further than free market economics and individualism based on consumption. Peter Clarke has identified that Thatcherism was as much about social morality, supposedly based on 'Victorian values', as it was about economic neo-liberalism.¹⁵ As such, free market economics, individualism and conservative morality all interlinked in the ideology of Thatcherism. More recent work has confirmed these values. Amy Edwards has highlighted the focus of Thatcherism on the 'accumulation of capital' through share ownership and Chris Moores' work on the 1980s Neighbourhood Watch Schemes (NWS) displays the societal shift towards "traditional" Thatcherite values.¹⁶

Paul Heelas connects enterprise culture and Thatcherism, stating 'the ideal enterprising self also [incorporated] many of the virtues of the conservative self, such as hard work and thrift'.¹⁷ Entrepreneurs engaged with the notions of hard-work, personal responsibility and,

¹³ Simon Gunn and Rachel Bell, *Middle Classes: Their Rise and Sprawl*, Paperback edn (London: Phoenix, 2003), pp. 225-9; David Cannadine, *Class in Britain* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 17-18; Jon Lawrence and Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 'Margaret Thatcher and the Decline of Class Politics', in *Making Thatcher's Britain*, ed. by Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 132-47 (p.134).

¹⁴ Arthur Marwick, *British Society Since 1945*, 4th edn (London: Penguin Books, 2003), pp. 172, 263.

¹⁵ Clarke, *Hope and Glory*, pp. 367, 379-80.

¹⁶ Edwards, "Financial Consumerism", p. 210; Moores, 'Thatcher's Troops?', pp. 231-3.

¹⁷ Heelas, 'Reforming the Self', in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Keat and Abercrombie, p. 80.

therefore, individualism, embracing the supposedly Victorian value of ‘self-help’ that Thatcherism promoted.¹⁸ Heelas also relates the entrepreneurial characteristics that Thatcherism promoted to another aspect of Thatcherite ideology drawn from “Victorian values”: active citizenship.¹⁹ Moores’ exploration into the NWS shows that active citizenship was another key aspect of the Thatcherite ideology.²⁰ This thesis will build upon these conceptions of Thatcherism and the connections between them through the lens of South Asian representation and a more focused look at enterprise culture.

Property-ownership was also a central part of Thatcherite rational. Although this had long been a popular thought in Conservative thinking, it was Thatcher who introduced it into wider society.²¹ Home-ownership was a middle-class ideal in the 1970s.²² However, Thatcher’s Right to Buy scheme links this back to Lawrence and Sutcliffe-Braithwaite’s argument that Thatcher sought to expand the middle-class.²³ The focus on home-ownership reaffirmed the middle-class nature of the Thatcherite ideology whilst simultaneously expanding home-ownership to a wider notion as a British value. Home-ownership also highlighted Thatcherism’s commitment to free market economics. Francis has noted that it was thought that by encouraging home-ownership people would have greater choice in life and it would be the first step in movements towards an independent person.²⁴

Understanding Thatcherism through the representation of South Asian businessmen is valuable because the current narratives of Thatcherite middle-classness are implicitly white. Deborah Phillips, Philip Sarre and Arun Kundnani have tried to address this issue. Phillips and Sarre identify that where there has been work on race and class it has largely focused on the black community and their integration to the working-class.²⁵ Phillips and Sarre highlight that there was an ingrained racism in the class system. Minority members exceeded white qualifications and status whilst also working for lower wages, suggesting that a white middle-

¹⁸ Edwards, “Financial Consumerism”, p. 215; Paul Gilroy, ‘...We Got To Get Over Before We Go Under ... Fragments for a History of Black Vernacular Neoliberalism’, *New Formations*, 80–81 (2013), pp. 23–38 (p.26); Moores, ‘Thatcher’s Troops?’, p. 231; Russell Keat, ‘Introduction: Starship Britain or Universal Enterprise?’, in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Russell Keat and Nicholas Abercrombie, Routledge Revivals edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp.1–17 (p.3).

¹⁹ Heelas, ‘Reforming the Self’, in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Keat and Abercrombie, pp.84–5.

²⁰ Moores, ‘Thatcher’s Troops?’, p. 230.

²¹ Francis, “‘A Crusade’”, pp. 276–80.

²² Sharon J. Daye, *Middle-Class Blacks in Britain* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1994), p. 2.

²³ Lawrence and Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, ‘Margaret Thatcher’, in *Making Thatcher’s Britain*, ed. by Jackson and Saunders, p. 134.

²⁴ Francis, “‘A Crusade’”, pp. 287, 289, 294.

²⁵ Deborah Phillips and Philip Sarre, ‘Black Middle-Class Formation in Contemporary Britain’, in *Social Change and the Middle Classes*, ed. by T. Butler and Mike Savage (London: UCL Press, 1995), pp. 76–91 (p. 78).

class was an aim of British culture.²⁶ Kundnani also brings race and class together. Kundnani notes that there were minority middle-class members but argues that these people were presented by the *Daily Mail* as the exceptions rather than the rule.²⁷ This implicit whiteness can also be seen in the history of entrepreneurialism. Karen Verduijn and Caroline Essers have published work which touches on both gender and ethnicity within entrepreneurialism.²⁸ However, research that understands racialized narratives as part of a wider history of Thatcherism and class are still lacking. Building on the work of sociologists, and the historians who have engaged with race as part of wider historical narratives (Francis, Schofield, Schaffer and Nasar), this research will assess theories of Thatcherism through the presentation of South Asian businessmen and demonstrate that racialized narratives of the British class system and Thatcherism are required when trying to understand British society in the 1980s.²⁹

Gender Theory, Entrepreneurialism and Business

Raewyn Connell and James Messerschmidt describe masculinity as the ‘configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting’.³⁰ In other words, masculinity—or masculinities—are the ways in which people behave which are associated with being male. Steve Craig has given a more simplistic description of masculinity as ‘what culture expects of men’.³¹ These two different ways of approaching masculinity both hold truth. Craig’s definition presents an overly-simplistic view of masculinity because it fails to engage with the fact masculinity is plural. Connell and Messerschmidt’s definition engages with multiple masculinities in an explicit fashion. They also identify that the dominant masculinity is neither the exclusive masculinity in society nor is it always the most prevalent.³² Understanding that masculinities were the way men were expected to behave is important when addressing gendered groups such as South Asian businessmen. Through looking at South Asian representation in relation

²⁶ Phillips and Sarre, ‘Black Middle-Class’, in *Social Change and the Middle Classes*, ed. by Butler and Savage, pp. 76–91.

²⁷ Arun Kundnani, “‘Stumbling on’: Race, Class and England”, *Race & Class*, 41.4 (2000), 1–18 (p. 7).

²⁸ Karen Verduijn and Caroline Essers, ‘Questioning Dominant Entrepreneurship Assumptions: The Case of Female Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurs’, *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 25.7–8 (2013), 612–30.

²⁹ Francis, ‘Mrs Thatcher’s Peacock Blue Sari’, pp. 274–93; Schofield, “‘A Nation or No Nation?’”, in *Making Thatcher’s Britain*, ed. by Jackson and Saunders, pp. 95–110; Schaffer and Nasar, ‘The White Essential Subject’, pp. 209–30.

³⁰ R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, ‘Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept’, *Gender and Society*, 19.6 (2005), pp.829–59 (p. 836).

³¹ Steve Craig, ‘Considering Men and the Media’, in *Men, Masculinity and the Media*, ed. by Steve Craig (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, 1992), pp. 1–7 (p. 3).

³² Connell and Messerschmidt, ‘Hegemonic Masculinity’, pp.832, 838.

to these masculinities, it will be shown that enterprise masculinities of the 1980s were understood as white identities.

An implicit whiteness was especially present in entrepreneurial masculinities. As Thatcherism grew in prominence so did the new enterprise culture and a focus on entrepreneurialism. Entrepreneurialism, within academic literature, has consistently been identified as masculine.³³ Verduijn and Essers have highlighted that the language around entrepreneurialism defined it as masculine and that literature on entrepreneurialism has always assumed a male audience.³⁴ Using the example of ‘the female entrepreneur’ Verduijn and Essers note that simply by using the term ‘female’ the phrase others women. The same can be said for ethnic minority entrepreneurialism. Non-male and non-white entrepreneurial identities both reinforce the norm of whiteness and, in turn, emphasise their exclusion.³⁵ The assumption that business was masculine established it a homosocial space of interaction. This meant those entering careers in business and enterprise were both defined as masculine for their careers, but also had to assert that they were masculine if they did not conform to normalized definitions. As South Asian businessmen were part of, and identified as, the minority community they therefore had to negotiate this dynamic. Although race, and class, are acknowledged as impacting masculinity by Connell, studies of British business masculinities tended to not engage fully with them.³⁶ As such, Chapter 2 will look at how South Asian businessmen were presented in relation to the prominent business masculinities at the time. This, in turn, will allow us to develop a racialized understanding of business masculinities in Britain and see how the theories worked outside an explicitly white experience.

Race and Identity Theory

Although the implicit whiteness of British society had not been addressed in some histories, Stuart Hall and the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) were central to developing discourses which looked at race and ethnicity. However, in their most notable work, *Policing the Crisis*, ethnic minority experiences were broadly homogenised under political blackness. Although the work focused on the Afro-Caribbean and African communities in

³³ Verduijn and Essers, ‘Questioning Dominant Entrepreneurship’, p. 614.

³⁴ Verduijn and Essers, ‘Questioning Dominant Entrepreneurship’, p. 614; Kate Mulholland, ‘Entrepreneurialism and, Masculinities and the Self-Made Man’, in *Men as Managers, Managers as Men: Critical Perspectives on Men, Masculinities and Managements*, ed. by David L. Collinson and Jeff Hearn (London: SAGE Publications, 1996), pp. 123-49 (p. 124).

³⁵ Verduijn and Essers, ‘Questioning Dominant Entrepreneurship’, pp. 614-615.

³⁶ R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p. 9; Mulholland, ‘Entrepreneurialism’, in *Men as Managers, Managers as Men*, ed. by Collinson and Hearn, pp. 124-5; Michael Roper, *Masculinity and the British Organization Man Since 1945* (Oxford University Press, 1994).

Britain, the momentary mentions of the Asian community suggested that the CCCS viewed them as black. According to the CCCS, black and Asian diasporas were unified through their alienness and otherness which further homogenised the minority experience under the banner of blackness.³⁷ Hall and Paul Gilroy's theorising was influenced by a Marxist narrative of a unified proletariat fighting the bourgeoisie. Gilroy saw race as a way of experiencing class and presented a narrative of unity between the black community and striking miners because both were considered enemies. As such, Gilroy's lens of Marxism encouraged him to oversimplify experiences through homogenisation.³⁸

Julia Sudbury's research on women's movements promoted the notion of political blackness as a way of understanding the past. Using interviews with women who were involved in Black Women's Organizations, including some from the South Asian diaspora, Sudbury reiterates the narratives presented by Gilroy and argues that those who were non-white were considered a threat to British society. Thus, ethnic minority communities were unified under the banner of otherness and oppression. Sudbury therefore argued that the language of blackness provided an identity for all non-white peoples.³⁹ However, the interviews which promote political blackness largely came from women of African and Afro-Caribbean heritage, challenging a narrative of the South Asian diaspora fully engaging with the identity.⁴⁰

This inclination to homogenise British ethnic minorities under political blackness has faced opposition. Tariq Modood has written extensively on the subject and been influential in the move to a more nuanced understanding of ethnicity within the academic sphere. Identifying that 'black' has been used as a term meaning non-white, Modood has also argued that the term held unspoken bias which encouraged a focus on 'people of Sub-Saharan African origins'.⁴¹ Through this '[f]alse [e]ssentialism', the South Asian community was overlooked and ignored because of the connection between blackness and the African and Afro-Caribbean diasporas.⁴² Furthermore, Modood argues that there was a rejection of political blackness within the South Asian community, noting that, in one sample, 92 percent of 'teenage Sikh girls' rejected the identity, highlighting that "black' is for most Asians a forced identity'.⁴³ Modood's challenge

³⁷ Stuart Hall and others, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*, 2nd edn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 46-7, 159.

³⁸ Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*, Routledge Classics edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002), pp. 23, 29.

³⁹ Julia Sudbury, '(Re)Constructing Multiracial Blackness: Women's Activism, Difference and Collective Identity in Britain', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24.1 (2001), 29-49 (pp. 33-4).

⁴⁰ Sudbury, '(Re)Constructing', pp. 29-49.

⁴¹ Tariq Modood, 'Political Blackness and British Asians', *Sociology*, 28.4 (1994), 859-76 (pp. 860, 863).

⁴² Modood, 'Political Blackness', pp. 865-6.

⁴³ Modood, 'Political Blackness', pp. 869-70.

to political blackness displayed that a more nuanced understanding of Britain's ethnic minority communities could be uncovered.

Understanding political blackness as a historical moment is important when approaching the South Asian diaspora. Previous commitments to Marxist ideas homogenised the minority experience in Britain into both black, and working class, narratives. Although in recent years academia has moved away from the language of blackness to describe ethnic minority communities, historians have been slow to widen their focus in British history. This thesis will thus uncover a more nuanced understanding of Britain's relationship with race, as well as the South Asian experience itself, by placing the South Asian diaspora at the centre of its analysis. As such, Chapter 3 will build upon the sociological work on blackness to demonstrate that South Asians were represented differently to the black community in Britain. Furthermore, it will propose that this difference led to a reaffirmation of whiteness as central to a Thatcherite Britishness.⁴⁴

This thesis will thus intervene in current historiography in three areas. Firstly, it will engage with representations of South Asian businessmen in relation to Thatcherism and class. In doing so, the implicit whiteness present in middle-classness and entrepreneurialism will be displayed. It will also show how the media positioned South Asian businessmen as engaged with, and yet rejected from, Thatcherite middle-class and entrepreneurial identities. Following this, the media's portrayal of the relationship between South Asian businessmen and emerging entrepreneurial masculinities will be addressed. Again, an implicit whiteness will be shown to exist within British entrepreneurial masculinities, as well as the media's continued presentation of narratives which displayed a level of assimilation by South Asian businessmen whilst maintaining their otherness. Finally, South Asian representation in relation to Britain's other minority communities will be explored. It will be shown that the media's representation of South Asian businessmen suggested they were not fully British, whilst simultaneously diminishing the status of other ethnic minorities and raising the status of whiteness. Through looking at these areas, this thesis will show the importance of intersectionality, demonstrating that identity is complex and 'that identity is formed by interlocking and mutually reinforcing vectors of race, gender, class, and sexuality', although exploring sexuality in relation to this thesis' topic still needs to be addressed.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Satnam Virdee, *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 148-9.

⁴⁵ Jennifer C. Nash, 'Re-Thinking Intersectionality', *Feminist Review*, 89.1 (2008), 1-15 (p. 3).

Taken as a whole, this research will demonstrate that the media positioned South Asian businessmen as a group which were neither fully assimilated, nor fully rejected, into Thatcherite middle-classness and Britishness. Ultimately, this allowed an implicit whiteness to be expressed in the Britishness of the era. Britain's ethnic minority communities impacted on wider society and their histories must be written into broader narratives of British history. As such, this thesis will begin to address the current lack of acknowledgement around the histories of Thatcherite Britain and their implicit whiteness. It will also demonstrate how writing minority histories into wider historical narratives can inform and develop historians' understanding of contemporary Britain.

Methodology

It is important to define and historicize the language and terminology used both in this research and in contemporary sources. As has been addressed already, the use of political blackness homogenised the experiences of minority communities. The terminology surrounding the South Asian diaspora has the potential to have the same effect if it is not understood within its context. The term 'South Asian' in itself is, in some ways, unhelpful because it groups together diasporas from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, all of which have their own distinct culture, religion and histories.⁴⁶ This research will focus on diasporas from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh because these communities largely make up the British South Asian population.⁴⁷ When these communities arrived in Britain their experiences were far from uniform. Whereas people from Indian and East African Asian backgrounds tended to be successful at securing employment and an economic footing, the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities struggled.⁴⁸ These two communities had less disposable income and by the turn of the century their unemployment rate was at 18 percent. In contrast to this, Indian unemployment remained closer to the white community at 7 percent

⁴⁶ Ram Gidoomal and David Porter, *The UK Maharajahs: Inside the South Asian Success Story* (London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 1997), p. xiii.

⁴⁷ Office for National Statistics, *Ethnic Group, Local Authorities in England and Wales*, Census Data 2011, 27 March 2011

<<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/2011censuskeystatisticsforlocalauthoritiesinenglandandwales>> [accessed 30 October 2018].

⁴⁸ Tariq Modood, *Not Easy Being British: Colour, Culture and Citizenship* (London: Trentham Books, 1992), p. 41.

and 5.5 percent respectively.⁴⁹ Therefore, the use of the term South Asian may seem counterproductive within this context.

However, historically the Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities have been homogenised, and therefore referred to, as one community: the Asian community. With this research focusing on representations of these communities, understanding the experience within this context of homogenisation is important. Furthermore, the language of Asianness has not been removed from society. In the 2011 Census the options for people of Asian origins were 'Indian', 'Pakistani', 'Bangladeshi', 'Chinese' and 'Any other Asian background', all under the banner of 'Asian/Asian British'.⁵⁰ Although these sub-categories were provided, the banner of Asianness was still employed. Using the identifier South Asian therefore narrows the language of Asianness to communities with roots in the Indian sub-continent. The term South Asian was not, however, used in during Thatcher's time in power. Members of the South Asian community were identified as black, Asian or sometimes by their nationality. Whilst this thesis will look at their shared experience, more historical work is needed to explore the individual experiences of the national diasporas, as well as the wider sub-continental diaspora.

In their work on 'representation of ethnic entrepreneurship in US newspapers', Leona Achtenhagen and Cindy J. Prince Schultz have identified that newspapers can reflect and drive public thought and are important to understanding public discourse. They are also, therefore, an important source for understanding representations of minority communities.⁵¹ The language of blackness was used by newspapers to refer to both non-white minority communities and people of African and Afro-Caribbean decent. For this research, the language of blackness will be used within its modern context as referring to the Afro-Caribbean and African communities, excluding in quotations or in reference to historical uses of blackness. The historical use of blackness made searching newspapers difficult. Adrian Bingham has identified that the use of digitized newspapers can make searching easier because historians can eliminate papers quickly if a search returns few or no articles.⁵² However, identifying useful search queries proved more difficult. Finding relevant articles for South Asian businessmen was challenging because of the variation in the language around the South Asian

⁴⁹ Phillips and Sarre, 'Black Middle-class' in *Social Change and the Middle Classes*, ed. by Butler and Savage, pp. 81-2; Monder Ram and others, 'Ethnic Minority Enterprise in Its Urban Context: South Asian Restaurants in Birmingham', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 26.1 (2002), 24-40 (p. 32).

⁵⁰ Census 2011, 'Household Questionnaire England' (Office for National Statistics, 2011), p.8 <<https://census.ukdataservice.ac.uk/use-data/censuses/forms>> [accessed 5 November 2018].

⁵¹ Leona Achtenhagen and Cindy J. Prince Schultz, 'Invisible Struggles: The Representation of Ethnic Entrepreneurship in US Newspapers', *Community Development*, 46.5 (2015), 499-515 (pp. 499-502).

⁵² Adrian Bingham, 'The Digitization of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians', *Twentieth Century British History*, 21.2 (2010), 225-31 (p. 227).

community. The search process, therefore, took longer than usual with digitized print media because the articles had to be assessed individually. As such, limiting the papers used was a practical necessity. This was also limited by the availability of the papers through subscription services, another problem pointed out by Bingham.⁵³

With the research engaging with notions of middle-classness it was important to limit newspapers to ones which were aimed at this demographic. *The Times*, *Daily Mail*, *Guardian* and *Observer* were four of these papers.⁵⁴ In the 1980s, partisanship in newspapers became more prominent and a general move to the right occurred as more interventionist owners emerged. *The Times* was bought by the well-known Thatcherite Rupert Murdoch and the editor of the *Daily Mail*, David English, received a knighthood from the Prime Minister.⁵⁵ This affirmed both papers' position, which were traditionally conservative, on the right.⁵⁶ The *Guardian* and the *Observer* provide a left leaning perspective.⁵⁷

The *Birmingham Post* and the *Asian Times* provided a different, but important, perspective on representations of South Asian businessmen. Birmingham had a large South Asian community which contributed to economic growth for ethnic minority business. Cheryl McEwan, Jane Pollard and Nick Henry note that, by 1998, ethnic minority business contributed to up to 33 percent of Birmingham's business.⁵⁸ As such, having a newspaper from the region meant a slightly different perspective could be explored. However, the *Birmingham Post* was still a geographically large paper, covering events across the West Midlands, meaning that it maintained a relatively wide focus. The *Asian Times* allows for some of the views of the South Asian media to be explored and compared to those expressed in the national papers. The newspaper was overtly left-wing. The first edition outlined that it was 'a campaigning newspaper' and distanced itself from the middle-class businessmen. Instead, the newspaper aligned itself with the working-class 'labour force' members of the diaspora.⁵⁹ Despite this, the publication did cover businessmen from the diaspora and therefore allows comparisons to be made with the mainstream papers.

⁵³ Bingham, 'The Digitization', p. 226.

⁵⁴ Raymond Kuhn, *Politics and the Media in Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 3.

⁵⁵ James Curran and Jean Seaton, *Power Without Responsibility: Press, Broadcasting and the Internet in Britain*, 7th edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), pp. 69-70, 72, 201.

⁵⁶ Kuhn, *Politics*, p. 216.

⁵⁷ Kuhn, *Politics*, pp. 31, 214, 219-20.

⁵⁸ Cheryl McEwan, Jane Pollard, and Nick Henry, 'The "Global" in the City Economy: Multicultural Economic Development in Birmingham', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 29.4 (2005), 916-33 (pp. 917-918).

⁵⁹ 'Where We Stand', *Asian Times*, 28 January 1983, pp. 1, 4 (p. 1).

Finally, the television show *Tandoori Nights* and the film *My Beautiful Laundrette* will be used to provide two case studies for representations of South Asian businessmen on screen.⁶⁰ Both *Tandoori Nights* and *My Beautiful Laundrette* were productions from within the South Asian diaspora. The Bombay-born Farrukh Dhondy was *Tandoori Nights* main script-writer and *My Beautiful Laundrette* was from the mind of Hanif Kureishi, who has English and Pakistani heritage.⁶¹ John Hill has identified that *My Beautiful Laundrette* was not well received by the South Asian community because of its engagement with homosexuality and its money-orientated portrayal of the diaspora's businessmen. However, Hill also notes that the film intended to 'emphasize the plural, complex, and criss-crossed character identities'.⁶² The intersectionality of the film, and its author, is why *My Beautiful Laundrette* is valuable for this research. Through using these productions, in conjunction with contemporary newspapers, a vision of how South Asian businessmen were presented in relation to class, gender and race will emerge. This will inform both understandings of the South Asian community and Thatcherite Britain.

Thesis Structure

To understand how the South Asian community was presented, and the importance of these portrayals, the relationships between their presentations and class, gender and race must be addressed. Each chapter of this thesis will investigate one of these themes and how it contributed to the formation of the public image of South Asian businessmen in 1980s Britain. Chapter 1 explores the presentation of South Asian businessmen in relation to class. The Chapter looks at how South Asians were presented as engaging with the Thatcherite ideals of active citizenship, home ownership and entrepreneurialism. Therefore, the Chapter shows the complex nature of the South Asian identity and its relationship with class. Chapter 2 addresses the businessmen and their representation as businessmen. With the rise of the new enterprise culture came new masculinities. However, the way the media linked the new masculinities and the businessmen again presented a complex narrative which in some ways embraced and other ways rejected the acceptance of South Asian businessmen into constructions of middle-classness. Finally, Chapter 3 looks at the language of race used to describe both South Asian

⁶⁰ *Tandoori Nights*, Channel 4, 1985, 1987 [on DVD]; *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

⁶¹ 'Farrukh Dhondy', *IMDB* <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0223585/bio?ref_=nm_ov_bio_sm> [accessed 20 November 2018]; 'Hanif Kureishi', *British Library* <<https://www.bl.uk/people/hanif-kureishi>> [accessed 20 November 2018].

⁶² John Hill, *British Cinema in the 1980s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 212.

businessmen and the wider diaspora. The shift away from political blackness in the media further complicated the way in which the South Asian diaspora, and businessmen, were presented. The businessmen's prominence within the narratives of the South Asian diaspora led to a stereotype of success emerging for the community. However, the narrative was not that straight forward. As with class and gender, the way that South Asians were represented in relation to race positioned them in between Britishness and an identity as an ethnic minority. Ultimately, this thesis argues that the media presented South Asian businessmen as more integrated and assimilated than other ethnic minority groups, but maintained their difference and otherness from Thatcherite conceptions of middle-classness. This positioning from the media served to reinforce an implicit whiteness within Britishness throughout the Thatcher years.

Chapter 1: Thatcherism

When Margaret Thatcher was elected as Prime Minister in 1979, she brought with her a philosophy of free market economics, de-regulation, individualism and the rolling back of the state. Thatcherism also developed as an ideology throughout Thatcher's time as Prime Minister. This chapter will explore the Thatcherite themes of home-ownership, enterprise culture, and active citizenship in relation to the South Asian diaspora. A key part of Thatcherite rhetoric was expanding home-ownership. This began to symbolise more than self-reliance within the ideology. Matthew Francis has noted that, under Thatcherism, home-ownership was thought to develop engagement with society and would provide greater choice for people, therefore encouraging support for the free market.⁶³ Encouraging entrepreneurialism was another central Thatcherite aim. Russell Keat has identified that the Thatcherite ideology placed an emphasis on the "enterprising" qualities of 'initiative, energy, independence, boldness, self-reliance, a willingness to take risks and to accept responsibility for one's actions'.⁶⁴ Finally, Thatcher wanted to create a society of active citizens, based on Victorian values, who took on more responsibility and thus allowed the state to reduce its role.⁶⁵ These beliefs and desires, especially the longing to see home-ownership grow, were not new to British politics. However, it was under Thatcher that they were moulded into an ideology that was designed to impact British life.

In many ways, South Asian businessmen epitomised an idealised Thatcherite vision of middle-classness: self-reliant business and home-owners. The rise of South Asian businessmen in the business world reinforced Thatcherite belief in meritocracy and that, through hard work, anyone could achieve economic success. However, the media's presentation of South Asian businessmen's relationship with Thatcherism was complex. Newspaper reports did not often directly associate the businessmen with this prevailing ideology. When the businessmen were presented as engaging with Thatcherism in the media their portrayal was not always positive. These representations removed South Asian businessmen from being able to fully engage with the Thatcherite ideology, with their removal insinuating an implicit whiteness within British middle-class society.

This chapter addresses how the South Asian diaspora was represented in relation to each of the three key aspects of Thatcherism previously outlined. Firstly, newspaper reports on

⁶³ Francis, "'A Crusade'", pp. 287, 289, 294.

⁶⁴ Keat, 'Introduction', in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Keat and Abercrombie, p. 3.

⁶⁵ Moores, 'Thatcher's Troops?', pp. 231-3.

home-ownership and discrimination in the housing market are examined. South Asian home-ownership was high, with seventy-five percent of the Asian population owning their property in 1970s Britain.⁶⁶ Through this economic and social independence (home-ownership) people were supposedly able to contribute further to their local community, linking independence, individualism and citizenship.⁶⁷ However, when South Asians tried to buy housing in middle-class areas they were faced with opposition from local communities. This discrimination displayed an implicit whiteness present within British middle-classness.

Following this, representations of South Asian business are investigated. There was more widespread agreement within the media that South Asian businessmen were engaging with Thatcherite notions of free market economics, hard work and self-reliance. However, the growing prevalence of Thatcherism as a white ideology complicated these representations. The press' presentation of South Asian businessmen as engaging with Thatcherism also insinuated that they were moving away from their diasporic communities, re-affirming Thatcherism's supposed whiteness. The portrayal of South Asian businessmen also positioned them in between a British and South Asian identity. This was reinforced through their representation on screen. Both *Tandoori Nights* and *My Beautiful Laundrette* presented complex South Asian characters struggling to simultaneously engage with the Thatcherite business world and their South Asian roots.⁶⁸

Finally, the media's portrayal of the businessmen's engagement with active citizenship is considered. South Asian businessmen were presented by the media as supporting one another and having financial support from their diaspora. The financial backing and internal support structures that the media displayed the South Asian community as having suggested the diaspora created a microcosmic example of Thatcherism in society. Despite this, the press positioned South Asian businessmen outside of the Thatcherite framing of active citizenship for most of the period. Although towards the end of the 1980s there was a shift, with some newspapers reporting on South Asian involvement in giving, the engagement was framed around giving that contributed to wider British society. This cemented the whiteness of Thatcherism and Britishness, with the businessmen's engagement only being valued by the press when it was seen as contributing beyond their diaspora. Through looking at home-

⁶⁶ Pat Thane and others, *Equalities in Great Britain, 1946-2006* (Centre for Contemporary British History, Institute of Historical research, University of London, 2007), 1-193 (p.32)

<http://www.historyandpolicy.org/docs/equalities_review.pdf> [accessed 9 November 2018].

⁶⁷ Raman Selden, 'The Rhetoric of Enterprise', in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Russell Keat and Nicholas Abercrombie, Routledge Revivals edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 58-71 (p. 69).

⁶⁸ *Tandoori Nights*, Channel 4, 1985, 1987 [on DVD]; *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

ownership, small business and active citizenship, this chapter argues that South Asian businessmen were presented as engaging with Thatcherism and yet rejected from the Thatcherite vision of middle-classness, which held an implicitly white identity. This representation of the businessmen by the media placed them in a complex position between a British and South Asian identity. Furthermore, the continued rejection of them from a Thatcherite identity reaffirmed an implicit racism and whiteness present in Britain at the time.

The Home-Owning Minority

Thatcherite rhetoric used home ownership as a way for individuals to display their citizenship.⁶⁹ Up until the 1980s, owning property had also been a signifier of being middle-class. The Conservative Party wanted to expand this and take ‘the dignity and status of home ownership to the British working people’.⁷⁰ Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite has argued that in the 1980s people began to move away from the lexicon of class and viewing society as a classed structure (although people still acknowledged inequality).⁷¹ However, Selina Todd argues that economic inequality increased and society became more divided despite the 1981 Housing Act, which encouraged council tenants to buy their homes with cheap mortgages.⁷² Contemporary thinking supports Todd’s analysis. Research from the Small Business Research Trust in 1988 showed that home-ownership was still a significant indicator of economic capital in Britain.⁷³ Home-ownership, therefore, remained a staple of the middle-class identity despite the Thatcher government introducing the Right to Buy scheme.

South Asian home-ownership was high in the 1970s.⁷⁴ This continued to be a trait of the Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities with high levels of ownership reported in 1991.⁷⁵ However, the 1980s saw a shift in what aspects of home ownership made someone middle-class. The place in which the home was owned and the space it occupied increased in importance. Mike Savage argues that the middle-classes actively chose their locations in line with their imagined landscapes. The location of a property, therefore, began to play a part in

⁶⁹ Edwards, “Financial Consumerism”, p. 213.

⁷⁰ David Howell, *Time to Move on: An Opening to the Future for British Politics* (London: Conservative Political Centre, 1976), p. 21.

⁷¹ Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, ‘Discourse of “class”’, pp. 309-310.

⁷² Selina Todd, *The People: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class, 1910-2010* (London: John Murray, 2014), pp. 319-320.

⁷³ James Curran and Rogers Burrows, *Enterprise in Britain: A National Profile of Small Business Owners and the Self-Employed* (London: Small Business Research Trust, 1988), pp. 77-85.

⁷⁴ Thane and others, *Equalities in Great Britain, 1946-2006*, p. 32.

⁷⁵ ‘Home ownership: Indians and Pakistanis lead the way’, *Asian Times*, 29 January 1991, p. 10.

how ownership related to class.⁷⁶ In a study of the middle-class black community, Deborah Phillips and Philip Sarre note that minority business and home-ownership was high amongst minority communities, but this was often confined to areas that were viewed to be undesirable. For Phillips and Sarre, this economic position pushed some minority community members out of the working-class and into the lower sections of the middle-class.⁷⁷ This is supported by Robin Ward, Susan Nowikowski and Ron Sims' 1982 work on Asian settlement in Britain. Ward *et al*'s research found that, of the Asians living in the 'inner city', 46.5% of the male heads of the household had jobs that would have defined them as middle-class, whereas only 31% of the white population were in the same position.⁷⁸ For Ward *et al* the middle-class included large business owners at the top of the scale, teachers and non-manual workers in the middle, and small business owners and the self-employed in the lower echelons.⁷⁹ Although the concept of the inner-city here would have referred to a more geographical understanding of the concept, the figures themselves identify that, on an economic level, ethnic minority middle-classes lived in inner-city areas. However, the growing importance of space and place to middle-classness meant that these communities' status as middle-class was potentially compromised through the location in which they lived. This problematises theories of the middle-class because it shows that traditional indicators of social mobility (home-ownership and employment) were beginning to hold less influence in classed identities.

The study of middle-classness in the inner-city is not necessarily new. Logan Nash's work on the gentrification of the Barbican Estate describes the area as 'an inner-city enclave for the middle class', displaying the middle-class invasion and transformation of the once working-class inner-city dilapidated spaces into trendy new places.⁸⁰ Despite gentrification breaking the link between the suburbs and middle-classness, it also identifies why class and its relationship to space and place need revision. The fact that those gentrifying were middle-class means that those already in the areas were assumed to be working-class.⁸¹ This, therefore, means that minority communities in these areas would have been presumed to be working-

⁷⁶ Mike Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940: The Politics of Method* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 31, 33, 36.

⁷⁷ Phillips and Sarre, 'Black Middle-Class', in *Social Change and the Middle Classes*, ed. by Butler and Savage, pp. 88-9.

⁷⁸ Robin Ward, Susan Nowikowski, and Ron Sims, 'Middle Class Asians and Their Settlement in Britain', in *Migrant Workers in Metropolitan Cities*, ed. by John Solomons (Strasbourg: European Science Foundation, 1982), pp.153-74 (p. 159).

⁷⁹ Ward, Nowikowski, and Sims, 'Middle Class Asians', in *Migrant Workers in Metropolitan Cities*, ed. by Solomons, pp. 156-7.

⁸⁰ Logan Nash, 'Middle-Class Castle: Constructing Gentrification at London's Barbican Estate', *Journal of Urban History*, 39.5 (2013), pp. 909-32 (p. 910).

⁸¹ Nash, 'Middle Class Castle', p. 913.

class regardless of their occupations or ownership status. Even though Thatcherism was meant to expand pride in ownership to the working-class, the shift in focus by the middle-classes to idealise the *place* one owned a home meant that Thatcherite visions of home-ownership were only of real value in middle-class areas.

One of the reasons that there was a high concentration of middle-class minorities that remained in the city can be attributed to the racism seen in middle-class suburbia. In 1980, the *Daily Mail*, along with several other local and national papers, reported that a judge had ruled in favour of a ‘couple who called [a] street meeting over Asians’ potentially buying a house on their street. Mr and Mrs Hardman were supported by the judge because they claimed that the reason for their concern was not that the street would have other ethnicities on it, but because ‘[t]hey were both very concerned whether having a coloured family next door would affect the value of their property’.⁸² The Hardman’s concerns around their property value epitomised the Thatcherite commitment to individualism. Razwinder Johal, the potential house buyer, put a sensible offer of £16,000 on the house in Oldbury. Despite this, his overall status was thought of as actively devaluing the community and was directly linked to his South Asian heritage.⁸³ In May of 1980, the second case of its kind was taken to court against Sam Lloyd and Mary Sabin. It was a similar accusation: neighbours had pressured the sellers to reconsider a bid from South Asians.⁸⁴ Similarly to the Hardman case, Sabin claimed ‘I was concerned about the effect the sale would have on the value of our own property’.⁸⁵ As well as this, it was reported that Mr Marsh, the owner of the house, ‘sold to a white purchaser who offered the same amount but did not ask for the carpets and curtains’.⁸⁶ This was, according to the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*, ‘commercial grounds’ to sell to the white buyer instead.⁸⁷

In both cases, the press reported the individualist narratives that the local white community employed to halt the sale to the South Asian middle-class. Thatcherite individualism promoted acting in ways which benefited one’s own economic position so that people could have more capital to spend elsewhere.⁸⁸ With the reports implicitly suggesting that individualism, rooted in racist fears around the supposedly negative economic impacts of minority communities, overruled the Thatcherite assurance of equal opportunities and home-

⁸² Aubrey Chalmers, ‘The right to discuss your new neighbours’ *Daily Mail*, 19 January 1980, p. 11.

⁸³ Aubrey Chalmers, ‘The right to discuss your new neighbours’ *Daily Mail*, 19 January 1980, p. 11.

⁸⁴ Sally Coetzee, ‘Neighbours face court over sale to Asians’, *Birmingham Post*, 13 May 1980, p. 3.

⁸⁵ Sally Coetzee, ‘Neighbours face court over sale to Asians’, *Birmingham Post*, 13 May 1980, p. 3.

⁸⁶ ‘Couple ‘pestered’ over selling house to Asians’, *Daily Mail*, 16 May 1980, p. 9.

⁸⁷ ‘Neighbours ‘didn’t want Asians’, *Guardian*, 17 May 1980, p. 5; ‘Man who didn’t want Asian family as neighbours’, *Daily Mail*, 17 May 1980, p. 9.

⁸⁸ Selden, ‘The Rhetoric of Enterprise’, in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Keat and Abercrombie, p. 69.

ownership, it was implied that South Asians found it more difficult to buy property in prosperous areas and therefore climb the social ladder.⁸⁹ The highlighting of this rejection by newspapers positioned South Asians outside of middle-class, Thatcherite, and British identities. Through blocking the sale of houses to South Asians, those in the middle-class exercising Thatcherite beliefs also denied the South Asian community their right to do the same. Reporting on the South Asians struggle to buy homes in prosperous areas presented a narrative that the diaspora was considered neither middle-class nor able to engage fully with the new marker of citizenship in Britain of home-ownership, despite their desire to do so. The difficulty that South Asians were presented as facing when trying to engage with Thatcherism displayed the implicit whiteness of the middle-classes. Although the article headlines read; 'Man who didn't want Asian family as neighbours', 'Neighbour 'didn't want Asians' and 'Couple 'pestered' over selling house to Asians', which were not headlines that would have been read in a favourable light, none of the articles overtly challenged the racism.⁹⁰ Individualism was thus used to keep the British middle-class white where possible. Though the reports suggested that South Asians were engaging with Thatcherite ideals, through attempts to buy homes in middle-class areas, they also indicate that core principles of Thatcherism were used to maintain whiteness within the middle-class.

Newspaper reports in the early years of Thatcher's government presented a South Asian community that tried to fulfil the quintessentially middle-class goal of home-ownership. However, they were held back by racism which employed Thatcherite individualism as a way to discriminate. In this sense, press reporting on Thatcherism presented a paradoxical narrative. Although the South Asian middle-classes were attempting to climb the social ladder, buy property and engage with the middle-class ideal of private property that Thatcherite rhetoric promoted, local communities used elements of the ideology against the aspiring South Asian middle-classes in order to maintain a racialized status quo. South Asians were, therefore, presented as excluded from this aspect of Thatcherite middle-classness.

Entrepreneurialism

Although newspaper reporting on the discrimination within the housing market was somewhat lacklustre, reporting on the South Asian business community was far more common. South

⁸⁹ Howell, *Time to move on*, p. 18.

⁹⁰ 'Neighbours 'didn't want Asians', *Guardian*, 17 May 1980, p. 5; 'Man who didn't want Asian family as neighbours', *Daily Mail*, 17 May 1980, p. 9; 'Couple 'pestered' over selling house to Asians', *Daily Mail*, 16 May 1980, p. 9.

Asian businessmen were gaining a reputation as entrepreneurs. A focus on small business was another central factor of Thatcherite thinking and was present in the 1979 and 1983 Conservative Party manifestos.⁹¹ Entrepreneurialism was firmly linked with Thatcherism through the rise of the ‘poor-boy-made-good’ narrative, self-help and an extension of the free market.⁹² Some South Asian businessmen began to epitomise this narrative. In 1980, the Durbar Club, a social club for rich Asian businessmen, was founded. Holding private events and fundraisers, the club donated £110,000 to the Conservative Party to pay for a new computer system.⁹³ The South Asian professional classes, therefore, became the epitome of the Thatcherite dream through developing social networks, earning vast sums of money and embodying the meritocratic, anyone-can-make-it, attitude.

Even before the 1980s there was a growing acceptance within the media of the South Asian community in Britain that was grounded in their involvement and contribution to society through business. In 1974, the *Birmingham Post* reported that ‘Sir Charles Cunningham, chairman of the Ugandan Asian Resettlement Board’ had stated that ‘[a]bout 85 per cent of the 12,000 Ugandan Asians who registered for work in Britain now have jobs “and are making a go of things,”’. Furthermore, Cunningham also noted that ‘there is a lot of evidence that they are beginning to move up the ladder in Britain’.⁹⁴ Although the experiences of the South Asian diaspora were not all identical, with East-African Asians and Indians generally being more economically successful than Bangladeshis and Pakistanis, this initial report indicated that there was a growing acceptance that South Asians were getting jobs and beginning to interact with the British class system.⁹⁵

This acceptance and acknowledgement continued in mainstream newspapers following Thatcher’s election in 1979. An article in the *Guardian* singled out the South Asian community as notable for having sections which were successful in enterprise and business.⁹⁶ *New Society* published an article titled, ‘The Asians of Leicester: a story of worldly success’, which stated that ‘in just over half a dozen years, [the East African Asians have] converted a decaying street

⁹¹ Margaret Thatcher Foundation Website (hereafter MTFW, followed by [Unique document ID], see bibliography for more information) 110858, *Conservative General Election Manifesto 1979*, 11 April 1979; MTFW 110859, *Conservative General Election Manifesto 1983*, 18 May 1983.

⁹² Robert Smith and Carol Air, ‘No Choices, No Chances: How Contemporary Enterprise Culture Is Failing Britain’s Underclasses’, *Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 13.2 (2012), 103–13 (p.103); Keat, ‘Introduction’, in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Keat and Abercrombie, pp. 2-3; Heelas, ‘Reforming the Self’, in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Keat and Abercrombie, pp. 74-5.

⁹³ Francis, ‘Mrs Thatcher’s Peacock Blue Sari’, p. 281.

⁹⁴ ‘Resettled Asians ‘are making a go of things’’, *Birmingham Post*, 12 January 1974, p. 7.

⁹⁵ Gidoomal and Porter, *UK Maharajahs*, p. 16; Phillips and Sarre, ‘Black Middle Class’, in *Social Change and the Middle Classes*, ed. by Butler and Savage, pp. 81-2; Ram and others, ‘Ethnic Minority Enterprise’, p. 32.

⁹⁶ Tom Cannon, ‘Positive discrimination and encouragement’, *Guardian*, 11 January 1980, p. 14.

earmarked for demolition into one of the most prosperous high streets in this country'.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the article highlighted the success of some of the South Asian businessmen, stating that;

[Harish Patel] quickly ticked off the marks of middle class success: a £9,000 Mercedes car, a £15,000 freehold house in Clarendon Park, Oadby—one of Leicester's posher suburbs, where he is surrounded by equally successful white businessmen or professionals—his children in public schools and a hectic business life that leaves little room for leisure.⁹⁸

With *New Society* and the *Birmingham Post* reporting on South Asian success, the foundation for a narrative of entrepreneurialism amongst the community was being laid. This created an unspoken link between successful South Asian businessmen and Thatcherism. It was also reported by *Conservative News* and the *Finchley Times* that the South Asian community received public praise from Margaret Thatcher when she addressed the Anglo-Asian Conservative Society (AACS) in Barnet in 1981. Thatcher commended the community for setting up businesses and creating jobs, saying it was 'exactly the spirit of enterprise we need in our country'.⁹⁹ The acclamation from Thatcher further linked South Asian business owners with Thatcherite visions of entrepreneurialism and middle-classness through direct comparison and an emphasis on their success.

Whilst these early reports and articles praised the South Asian community, counternarratives began to appear in the wider press during the early 1980s. This could be seen in a series of *Guardian* articles from 1982. One article, which was given an air of importance through its page 3 position, stated that South Asian businessmen were 'the new lumpen bourgeoisie'.¹⁰⁰ A narrative was reported which told of the difficulties South Asian businesses faced such as discrimination and having to work longer hours. The following week, Polly Toynbee reported on her old high street in Clapham. As the Asian community moved in and began taking over a lot of the local small businesses, '[e]veryone assumed these clever people were making a small fortune'. However, Toynbee reported that;

[Asian] owners were living on extremely low incomes, working long hours, with a high probability of failure at the end of the day.

⁹⁷ Mihir Bose, 'The Asians of Leicester: A Story of Worldly Success', *New Society*, 16 August 1979, pp. 339–41 (pp. 339–40).

⁹⁸ Mihir Bose, 'The Asians of Leicester: A Story of Worldly Success', *New Society*, 16 August 1979, pp. 339–41 (p. 340).

⁹⁹ MTFW 104746, 'Spirit of Enterprise', *Conservative News*, January 1982; MTFW 104746, 'Asian Spirit Praised by PM', *Finchley Times*, 26 November 1981.

¹⁰⁰ 'Asian success story 'an illusion'', *Guardian*, 9 September 1982, p. 3.

Asian entry into the petty bourgeoisie is bought at a high cost.¹⁰¹

This presented a challenge to the narratives of success and prosperity which indicated that the difficulties that South Asians faced in the housing market were more widespread. However, the article still presented the South Asian community as fulfilling middle-class Thatcherite ideals. Identifying their commitment to long hours reinforced the notion that the community was hard-working and willing to be self-sufficient. As a result of the 1973 recession, the commitment to one's job at high personal cost became a trait of the middle-classes.¹⁰² Furthermore, the article's acceptance of the community entering the petty bourgeoisie affirmed they were middle-class, albeit at the lower end of the group. Although the article was not critical of the South Asian community, it did present a narrative of difficulty and struggle. This set up a dichotomy between the hyper-successful South Asian entrepreneurs at the top of the business world and those working in small-scale local business. On the one hand, there were those fulfilling Thatcherite visions of the middle-class dream: money, success, influence and respect. On the other side there were those struggling to get by. Although the *Guardian* reported that South Asian businesses ran on low wages and long working hours, it was never explicitly said they were failing. These articles posed a counter-narrative to the supper-wealthy South Asian success story. Nevertheless, in doing so they also displayed that the community's lower wage earners were still committed to working long hours in order to succeed. In other words, the South Asian diaspora's business people were still presented by the press as engaging with Thatcherite middle-classness and entrepreneurialism regardless of their position within the class itself.

Papers on the right of the political spectrum also began to run articles which challenged South Asian success stories. However, whereas the *Guardian*'s articles had aimed to uncover poor working-class experiences, the *Daily Mail* used these experiences to explicitly criticise South Asian business owners. In 1983, the *Daily Mail* published an exposé on the inner workings of 'deadly, illicit sweat-shops' run by South Asians.¹⁰³ The article came two days after an explosion at an illegal shoe factory, earmarked for closure, in Kent which killed six, including three children.¹⁰⁴ The *Daily Mail* used evocative language to present a dire image of exploitation and poverty within these 'sweat-shops', describing one factory as 'a scene from

¹⁰¹ Polly Toynbee, 'Asian traders buy wisely, work long hours, and see their efforts rewarded with big profits. Or do they? There are few bonanzas in Clapham High Street...', *Guardian*, 17 September 1982, p. 12.

¹⁰² Gunn, and Bell, *Middle Classes*, pp. 199-203.

¹⁰³ Simon Kinnersley, 'Inside the deadly, illicit sweat-shops', *Daily Mail*, 8 November 1983, p. 6.

¹⁰⁴ John Hamshire, 'Six killed in fire at 'sweat shop'', *Daily Mail*, 7 November 1983, p. 15.

Dickens' with 'nine young girls huddled together stuffing filling into cushion covers'. The use of classic Dickensian language and references was clearly intended to appeal to a wider British consciousness. As the article progressed, the removal of South Asian businessmen from Thatcherite narratives of entrepreneurialism became more apparent:

Sadly, the natural industriousness of many, a large proportion of whom are Asians with considerable skills in the clothing industry, are exploited by their own people in a Dickensian manner.

Conditions can be deplorable — poor heating, dim lighting, non-existent safety precautions.

It was to eliminate just these Victorian conditions that the Factory Reform Acts were introduced early this century.¹⁰⁵

The continued reference to Dickensian conditions, and the placing of South Asian entrepreneur as the evil Victorian factory owner, suggested that they were selfish, money-minded individuals. Whereas in reports on discrimination in the housing market economic individualism was presented as a middle-class norm, in this example the *Daily Mail* insinuated these values were outdated, old-fashioned and exploitative. This narrative removed the businessmen from a Thatcherite entrepreneurialism and wider rhetoric which wanted to see people rise through the ranks as the result of their own hard work based around Victorian morality.

The portrayal of South Asian businessman as exploitative, and almost criminal, by the *Daily Mail* posed a stark contrast to the successful, business-minded individuals that Thatcher and earlier reports had discussed. The article appealed to the Thatcherite notions of morality and positioned South Asian businessman in opposition to the rhetoric through presenting them as villainous. Although Thatcherism promoted individual wealth creation this was supposedly intended to benefit wider society.¹⁰⁶ As such, the *Daily Mail* suggested the businessmen were only out for themselves. The criticism directed at South Asian businessmen draws attention to the double-standards that were present in society. Whilst the Thatcherite ideology pushed economic individualism, the criticism of South Asian business-owners embodying individualist attitudes indicates that there was an implicit whiteness within British society and Thatcherism.

Whilst the *Daily Mail* was not incorrect in identifying that many South Asians in the factories were on low wages, in many cases South Asians would have the help of their families

¹⁰⁵ Simon Kinnersley, 'Inside the deadly, illicit sweat-shops', *Daily Mail*, 8 November 1983, p. 6.

¹⁰⁶ Selden, 'The Rhetoric of Enterprise', in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Keat and Abercrombie, p. 69.

when starting small businesses. In a contrasting article from 1982, the *Birmingham Post* presented a more entrepreneurial narrative. After working and studying at the same time, Ram Parkash Paul set up a business making cheap overalls from a factory in his home. ‘Wolverhampton Council registered disapproval at their use of a house as a factory’ and instead offered an out-of-use chapel to which the business moved.¹⁰⁷ This article dramatically counteracts the narrative presented by the *Daily Mail*. Furthermore, the fact that Ram Paul’s factory was inspected, and that he made subsequent changes, showed that there were business-owners who were not trying to hide their practices, nor be purposefully exploitative. Avtar Brah and Sobia Shaw’s research into ‘South Asian Young Muslim Women and the Labour Market’ looked, in part, at factories in 1988 and 1989. Nahida, an interviewee, professed that there were equally poor conditions in both English owned and Asian owned factories, having worked in both.¹⁰⁸ Rather than reporting on the poor condition in factories and the exploitation of South Asian workers in general, the *Daily Mail* instead linked ‘illegal’ factories with South Asian business.¹⁰⁹ It is likely that, in its original iteration, Paul’s home factory would have been described as illegal by the standards of the *Daily Mail*’s article despite a clear intention to operate legally, as shown through the move to new premises. The *Birmingham Post* article showed that whilst South Asian business owners could start in factories that were disliked by the authorities, legitimate entrepreneurs were perfectly willing to meet regulation and were not trying to cut corners.¹¹⁰

The *Daily Mail*’s focus on South Asian businessmen suggested that they alone were the exploitative ones, not the wider business/entrepreneurial class. This was a clear attempt by the right-leaning paper to distance the South Asian community from Thatcherite notions of middle-classness and, what would have been considered, good moral business practices. In doing so, this attempt to remove the South Asian community from the realm of Thatcherite ideology ran parallel to the attempts seen in the housing market to limit South Asian middle-class expansion. The constant attempts to remove or limit South Asian businessmen’s access to the Thatcherite middle-class shows the implicit whiteness of the identity in Thatcher’s Britain. In the words of Phillips and Sarre; ‘[t]he whiteness of the British middle classes turns out to be not just an assumption or an oversight, but an implicit goal of British culture’.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Maureen Messent, ‘When business sense means self-respect’, *Birmingham Post*, 18 August 1982, p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ Avtar Brah and Sobia Shaw, *Working Choices: South Asian Young Muslim Women and the Labour Market* (Department of Employment, 1992), pp. 1, 22. All the names in this report were changed for anonymity.

¹⁰⁹ Simon Kinnersley, ‘Inside the deadly, illicit sweat-shops’, *Daily Mail*, 8 November 1983, p. 6.

¹¹⁰ Maureen Messent, ‘When business sense means self-respect’, *Birmingham Post*, 18 August 1982, p. 4.

¹¹¹ Phillips and Sarre, ‘Black Middle-Class’, in *Social Change and the Middle Classes*, ed. by Butler and Savage, p. 91.

Despite attempts within society to maintain a white middle-class, South Asian success did not go unnoticed. Throughout Thatcher's time in office there were reports of South Asian businessmen breaking through these barriers and becoming successful business people whilst continuing to display a commitment to Thatcherite qualities. The *Asian Times* ran several business profiles in 1985, one of which profiled businessman and entrepreneur Mohammad Younis, the founder of H B Enterprises (a company that provided Halal meat to airlines). Younis embodied the hard-working and socially mobile dream, building his company up from his small store, Haji Baba. Younis was also clearly committed to the notion of free market economics. He distanced his business from the local stores, telling the *Asian Times*, 'ours is a serious business not just a means of living' unlike the other South Asian business in the area, according to him. Younis dismissed the local stores as serious competition because Haji Baba had 'service with a smile'. He believed this meant that the English would 'always use our shops in preference to anybody else's'.¹¹² This distancing from other South Asian small businesses, and rejection of them as competition, reinforced the individualism and free market ideals presented by Younis. He believed his store attracted customers because it was the best and saw himself as working for profit, not just for enough to get by. The *Asian Times*' article therefore presented the businessmen as committed to individualism and reinforced the narrative amongst the diaspora.

South Asian businessmen were also presented as adhering to Thatcherite values of entrepreneurialism and economic individualism in film and television. Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette* focused on the upper-middle-class businessmen of the diaspora. In the film, Omar's Uncle Nasser (Saeed Jaffrey) exemplified the Thatcherite South Asian businessman. During the eviction of a poor Afro-Caribbean occupant in one of his houses, Nasser explained to his white working-class assistant, Johnny, that 'I'm a professional businessman not a professional Pakistani. And there is no question of race in the new enterprise culture'.¹¹³ In doing so, Nasser perfectly described the individualist Thatcherite ideal. Nasser acted for his personal economic benefit and focused on his business as the occupant was costing him money. The focus on money was reiterated throughout the film from the South Asian business community. Saleem (Derek Branche), another South Asian businessman, furthered the focus on financial benefit through telling Omar that 'we're nothing in England without money'.¹¹⁴ The constant focus on Thatcherite values from the South Asian businessmen in the

¹¹² Sushma Puri, 'Haji Baba at your service with a smile' *Asian Times*, 4 October 1985, p. 23.

¹¹³ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

¹¹⁴ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

film was a visible attempt by Kureishi to critique the business community of the diaspora. The businessmen were not portrayed in a favourable light. Nasser ends up crying in his brother's arms as his daughter, Tania (Rita Wolf), runs away.¹¹⁵ This negative characterisation was a critique of Thatcherism, but the film was also intended to challenge the notion of a homogenous experience for the South Asian community.¹¹⁶ In both *My Beautiful Laundrette* and Toynbee's article a narrative was presented suggesting that, for South Asians, access to the British middle-class and business world was costly in both a personal and economic sense.

The Channel 4 sitcom *Tandoori Nights* also portrayed South Asian businessmen on screen. The show, which focused on restaurateur Jimmy Sharma and his family as they attempted to navigate life, was a more humorous and somewhat favourable portrayal of South Asian businessmen. However, the show maintained the notion that these community members engaged with Thatcherite ideals, even if they were not Conservative. Jimmy constantly referred to his political leanings as firmly on the left, with one episode focusing on his past as a protester.¹¹⁷ However, the episode 'Alaudin's Gambol' explored Jimmy's character further and dealt with his Thatcherite tendencies more directly. Angela (Francesca Brill), a revolutionary socialist, caught Jimmy's eye and she initially believed his left-wing persona, ironically saying 'Y'know Jimmy you're not a bit what I was expecting. You know, a jumped-up petty bourgeois capitalist like most Asian businessmen'. However, she quickly saw through the disguise as the episode developed. Angela told Jimmy that Alaudin (Tariq Yunus), the restaurant's chef and a Conservative, was Jimmy's 'excuse' for not implementing these changes and maintaining a top-down business model.¹¹⁸

Both *Tandoori Nights* and *My Beautiful Laundrette* need to be understood within the context of what they were trying to do as entertainment and social commentary. *Tandoori Nights* was designed for easy viewing and entertainment, and therefore would have exaggerated characters to caricature them. However, it is clear the show's characters were designed to be somewhat relatable, with each member of the family fulfilling a different character within the South Asian diaspora. Jimmy's caricature of the South Asian businessman may have overexaggerated his commitment to economic individualism, especially considering his left-leaning political outlook, but the continued portrayal of South Asian businessmen as individuals who embodied Thatcherite ideals of entrepreneurialism and middle-classness

¹¹⁵ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD]

¹¹⁶ Hill, *British Cinema*, pp. 210-212.

¹¹⁷ 'Down with Oswald Pick', *Tandoori Nights*, Channel 4, 18 July 1985 [on DVD].

¹¹⁸ 'Alaudin's Gambol', *Tandoori Nights*, Channel 4, 6 November 1987 [on DVD].

suggests that this was a wide-spread opinion about the community. This is further supported by the characters in *My Beautiful Laundrette*. The film's characters were intended to represent real people, as John Hill notes that it engaged with reality and social-realism.¹¹⁹ Kureishi's story reaffirmed the image and perception of South Asian businessmen as committed to Thatcherite ideals.

South Asian businessmen in Thatcher's Britain were largely presented in media as holding Thatcherite values in relation to their identity as businessmen. In many cases, there were examples where they were presented as being committed to free market economics, meritocracy and those all-important Thatcherite ideals of self-help and hard work. However, as time went on, more challenges began to be raised against the narratives of success that had appeared. Although the media on the left and the right had different intentions, the narratives they presented either removed the businessmen from Thatcherite visions of success or criticised them for engaging with the ideology. In each case, this reasserted the inherent whiteness of Thatcherite visions of British business and middle-classness. Furthermore, it suggested that South Asian businessmen were somewhat removed from their own diaspora, which will be engaged with further in Chapters 2 and 3.

Active Citizenship

Another significant aspect of the Thatcherite vision for Britain was active citizenship. This Thatcherite ideal wanted to see citizens provide more resources and be more involved in their local communities. It was influential in the implementation of the NWS and was linked to the development of personal wealth and individualism.¹²⁰ This engagement in community was depicted as a way to legitimise the citizenship of non-white communities through engagement with society. In her 1982 speech at the Barnet AACS meeting, Thatcher included the South Asian community in such work, saying;

I want to make it absolutely clear that we are all here tonight as fellow citizens of the United Kingdom, [...] That means that each and every one of us, by virtue of being citizens of this country have equal rights, equal responsibility and equal opportunities, without regard to one's origins or class or background or race or creed. Citizenship embraces us all. [...] I know a tremendous number of you have been very active not only in setting up your businesses but, in doing so, creating employment for others.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Hill, *British Cinema*, pp. 217-218.

¹²⁰ Heelas, 'Reforming the Self', in *Enterprise Culture*, ed. by Keat and Abercrombie, p. 85; Moores, 'Thatcher's Troops?', pp. 230-1, 233.

¹²¹ MTFW 104746, 'Spirit of Enterprise', *Conservative News*, January 1982.

Thatcher's praise of the South Asian business community for contributing to their local area, through employment, indicated that this was a way to legitimize the community as British. Thatcher's speech suggested to the AACS that Thatcherism more broadly was for all, not just the white community.

The South Asian community's pre-existing social structures often mirrored ideals that Thatcher wanted to implement. Thatcherism promoted the idea of shared private ownership through shareholders, rather than the government. As Amy Edwards has highlighted, share ownership was intended to be for everyone under the Thatcher government.¹²² The hope was that there would have been shared wealth and more responsibility on the citizens over the government. A form of shared ownership was discussed in an article in the *Asian Times*. In a business profile of K.D. Patel, a Wembley based businessman, it was reported that 'the success of Asian businesses [could] be attributed to "long hours and the extended family"'. 'The extended family [had] "one cheque book" and this "common ownership of wealth"', that the article reported, was the reason many could start businesses even if they lacked funds.¹²³ The shared ownership and commitment to the diasporic community presented in the *Asian Times* ran parallel with Thatcher's vision for Britain. Although the shared economic capital was not for the wider non-diasporic community, the notion of shared wealth in this fashion can be seen as a microcosmic version of Thatcher's vision for wider society.

Shared ownership, and community comradery, amongst South Asian businessmen was also presented in *My Beautiful Laundrette*. At one point in the film, Omar was confronted by Saleem over some smuggled drugs that Omar stole and Saleem demanded reimbursement. However, he later let Omar off the hook, explaining;

It was an educational test I put on you to make you see you did a wrong thing. Don't in future bite the family hand when you can eat out of it. You need money just ask me. Years ago your uncles lifted me up, and I will do the same thing.¹²⁴

Although this seemingly kind gesture was made within the context of drug-smuggling, dealing, and theft, with Johnny selling the drugs on for profit, the overall notion that the diasporic community took responsibility for itself remained despite the negative implications in this situation.

¹²² Edwards, "Financial Consumerism", pp. 213-214.

¹²³ Amal Ramtohl, 'The rise of the Asian business in Wembley', *Asian Times*, 21 August 1987, p. 22.

¹²⁴ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

Both the *Asian Times* article and *My Beautiful Laundrette* presented South Asian businessmen as engaging with active citizenship. However, the two scenarios differ in their political implications. *My Beautiful Laundrette* maintained a consistently critical atmosphere towards the South Asian business community, presenting them as heartless Thatcherites who cared more about money and material goods than their diasporic communities and families. Saleem's character, in particular, was both Conservative and the antagonist of the film. All his actions were presented as portraying a Thatcherite view of the world. However, his speech complicated the matter, linking him back to the diasporic community.¹²⁵ Patel, on the other hand, was an active member of the Labour Party and his wife a local Labour councillor. Despite this, his 'rags to riches' story of working his way up through a business and becoming a successful businessman encapsulated the Thatcherite vision of mobility.¹²⁶ Although Patel may not have promoted Thatcher's government, his story fitted with the narratives the Conservatives wanted to tell. The *Asian Times*' portrayal of Patel's 'poor-boy-made-good' narrative indicates that Thatcherite ideas of social engagement were dispersing into wider society.¹²⁷

South Asian community support was also identified in mainstream newspapers. In 1983, the *Guardian* ran an article which indicated that one of the reasons that certain minority communities — the 'Asian' community included — were able to be successful was because they were 'able to supply starting capital, staffing, essential commodities and business connections', displaying that the community adopted a small-scale version of active citizenship.¹²⁸ In 1985, another article, that explored the higher failure rate amongst '[r]isk takers', identified 'Asian firms' as noteworthy for their success. It specifically noted that the South Asian community possessed 'business experience and strong family and community channels of assistance'.¹²⁹ The continued reference to community connections promoted the notion that there was an internal support structure within the diaspora. However, the *Guardian* article also eluded to the fact that many minority businesses were excluded from wider business because of racism, forcing them to focus on their own communities. This contradicted Thatcher's vision of equal opportunity whilst simultaneously allowing exclusionary Thatcherite notions of middle-classness and whiteness to resurface.¹³⁰ Natalia Vershinina and

¹²⁵ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

¹²⁶ Amal Ramtohol, 'The rise of the Asian business in Wembley', *Asian Times*, 21 August 1987, p. 22.

¹²⁷ Smith and Air, 'No choices, no chances', p. 103.

¹²⁸ Victor Keegan, 'Fried rice with everything', *Guardian*, 18 July 1984, p. 13.

¹²⁹ Clive Woodcock, 'Risk takers more likely to fail', *Guardian*, 26 July 1985, p. 20.

¹³⁰ MTFW 104746, 'Spirit of Enterprise', *Conservative News*, January 1982.

Yulia Rodionova have identified that purely viewing minority entrepreneurs within ‘ethnic markets’ is unhelpful because it sets up dichotomy when the entrepreneurs need to be contextualised within a wider framework.¹³¹ However, whilst this narrative can now be challenged by academics, the early foundations of the dichotomy can be seen in the opposing narratives presented in the media in Thatcher’s Britain. The businessmen were therefore presented as economically successful, embodying Thatcherite visions of business, middle-classness and active citizenship, but only within their own communities.

By 1990 this narrative appeared to have changed. *The Times*’ article on the Prince’s Trust dinner for South Asian businessmen highlighted charitable giving from amongst the community. Although the article identified the £5million raised for the Prince’s Trust at the event, the report contextualised the giving as a progression from wealthy South Asians only focusing on their own diaspora to an attitude which looked beyond their own community. The article cited the opening of a South Asian community centre, bought in 1977 with ‘the backing of Asian business’. The report stated that ‘there is no doubt about the wealth of Asian business, its concern for community matters, and the defensive and slightly surreptitious aspect to its dealings’.¹³² The article went on to employ racialized language, referring to South Asian giving as having ‘clannishness’ aspects, with communities being divided on religious lines. This re-emphasised the non-whiteness of the South Asian business community. The giving to the Prince’s Trust was marked out as different because it would benefit people outside of the South Asian diaspora. It was also recorded that money from the community had been given ‘to the rebuilding of the Globe Theatre’ and ‘the Lord Mayor’s Charity Appeal’ in Leeds. High profile businessman Nazmu Virani believed that one of the problems in East Africa was that there was no attempt to engage with the local community and writer and politician Zerbano Gifford believed that ‘Asians [were] becoming more English in their giving’.¹³³

On the surface, the article praised the integration of the rich and wealthy South Asian elite for giving beyond their diaspora. However, the suggestion at this being a progression implied that this was a new endeavour for the community. The citing of a 1977 purchase of an old church for a community centre expressed a narrative of insular giving. This promoted the notion of internal community support whilst firmly removed the community from the wider white Thatcherite vision of active citizenship. The sectarian giving discussed in the article

¹³¹ Natalia Vershinina and Yulia Rodionova, ‘Methodological Issues in Studying Hidden Populations Operating in Informal Economy’, *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 31.11–12 (2011), 697-716 (pp. 697-8).

¹³² Naseem Khan, ‘Asian accent on generosity’, *The Times*, 6 June 1990, p. 18.

¹³³ Naseem Khan, ‘Asian accent on generosity’, *The Times*, 6 June 1990, p. 18.

further suggested that South Asian businessmen were focused on their own communities rather than wider society. Even though this somewhat excluded the businessmen from active citizenship, the narrative of progression presented by the article insinuated that, by the time of writing, the community was more actively engaged with wider British society through their shift away from 'clannishness' and the embracing of white British values.¹³⁴

Although *The Times*' article indicated to its readers that the South Asian community were now looking outward, a *Daily Mail* report which partially covered the same news suggested otherwise. In a two-page article, headlined 'Britain's Black Bourgeoisie', the paper also noted the £5million sum raised for the Prince's Trust. However, the *Daily Mail* presented the donation as giving to an 'initiative to encourage young members of their community to follow them into the world of enterprise'.¹³⁵ The suggestion that South Asians were exclusively supporting their own community re-affirmed a vision of the diaspora as insular, even if this was within the context of praising their economic success. Furthermore, the reporting that the money raised was for their own community contradicted *The Times*, which stated the money was for anyone, although the South Asian community was considered a priority by the Prince's Trust.¹³⁶ The exclusion of this information from the *Daily Mail* reaffirmed that active citizenship in wider society was reserved for the white community. Although the article could be seen as progress, with it praising the success and somewhat Thatcherite nature of the business-people, the South Asian business community was presented as disengaged from wider white British society.

Although it was not explicitly discussed, the microcosmic Thatcherite nature of the South Asian community in relation to active citizenship was increasingly presented in newspaper reports throughout the 1980s. As such, through the period the press shifted from presenting South Asians as insular to viewing them as more outward-looking. However, this was not universal. Despite the community being presented as embracing Thatcherite tendencies of self-help, active citizenship and shared private ownership, the continued attempts to exclude South Asians from Thatcherite narratives meant that the community was sometimes praised whilst not being fully enfranchised into ideals of Britishness. This exclusion reaffirmed the link between whiteness and Britishness.

¹³⁴ Naseem Khan, 'Asian accent on generosity', *The Times*, 6 June 1990, p. 18.

¹³⁵ Frances Hardy, 'Britain's Black Bourgeoisie', *Daily Mail*, 26 June 1990, pp. 20-21 (p. 20).

¹³⁶ Naseem Khan, 'Asian accent on generosity', *The Times*, 6 June 1990, p. 18.

Conclusion: Not British Enough

Throughout Thatcher's time in government the media presented South Asian businessmen as modelling the Thatcherite ideals that linked them with middle-classness, entrepreneurialism and active citizenship, whether it was through shared wealth amongst the diaspora or through community engagement. Thatcherite ideals of self-help and hard-work emerged as a prominent theme in the success stories of South Asian businessmen who put in long hours and determination. Not only did these reports and portrayals of South Asian businessmen present them as Thatcherite, but they also presented them as middle-class. The commitment to their jobs, home-ownership and, in some cases, the economic capital to move, or attempt to move, into the suburbs all played up ideas that South Asian businessmen embodied Thatcherite and middle-class identities.

Furthermore, the narratives from the media of widespread engagement with Thatcherite middle-classness from South Asian businessmen indicated that the ideology was becoming more widespread. Thatcher appeared to have crafted a Thatcherite nation who held ideals that transcended political leanings. This is visible in Moores' work through his identification that people joined the NWS irrespective of if they were Conservatives or not.¹³⁷ Similarly, South Asian businessmen still appeared to embody Thatcherite attitudes regardless of their political leanings.¹³⁸ Thus, the media presented South Asian businessmen as microcosmically modelling Thatcherite visions of middle-classness, as well as reflecting a wider trend in society of slowly but surely embracing aspects of Thatcherism as part of mainstream thinking.

However, identification by the press of the difficulty in purchasing houses in middle-class areas distanced the South Asians from Thatcherite ideas of middle-classness. Despite some positive reporting, South Asian businessmen were continuously excluded from the middle-classes by the media. When the businessmen were presented as embracing Thatcherism, this was within the context of high personal or economic cost, potentially at the expense of being removed from their own diaspora. Both narratives reaffirmed the Thatcherite middle-class and Britishness as white. Narratives within the media suggested that for non-white communities to be included in middle-class identities they had to adopt white British customs. These narratives of exclusion from middle-class aspects of the Thatcherite ideology asserted

¹³⁷ Moores, 'Thatcher's Troops', p. 234.

¹³⁸ 'Asians will vote Labour', *Asian Times*, 5 June 1987, p. 1.

an implicit whiteness, affirming Phillips and Sarre's conclusion that British society itself aspired to maintain its own white identity.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ Phillips and Sarre, 'Black Middle-Class', in *Social Change and the Middle Classes*, ed. by Butler and Savage, p. 91.

Chapter 2: Masculinity

As South Asian businessmen attempted to engage with Thatcherism and middle-classness throughout the 1980s, their status as businessmen was important to the formation of their public image. Representations of South Asian businessmen in the media suggested that they engaged with emerging business masculinities but were not fully accepted into the fold. Entrepreneurialism itself was consistently identified as a male career.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, Raewyn Connell's indication that race, class and gender are interlinked means that understanding one will contribute to understanding the others.¹⁴¹ As such, recognising how South Asian businessmen were presented as engaging with British masculinities reveals more about their acceptance in Britain at this time. It also develops a greater understanding of the masculinities themselves. With this in mind, analysing the media's portrayal of South Asian businessmen's relationship to business masculinities should contribute to a more nuanced understanding of their place within wider society.

Across the media, South Asian businessmen were presented, in different forms, as trying to adopt the new masculinities. Firstly, the whiteness of British business masculinities is outlined. Representations of South Asian businessmen on screen and in the press indicated that they were trying to engage with a white masculinity, asserting the racialized nature of the business world. This meant that those entering into business and entrepreneurial careers were defined as masculine for their jobs. They also had to assert that they were masculine if they did not conform to normalized definitions. Following this, the chapter will assess two key aspects of business masculinities to further understand the representations of South Asian businessmen: homosocial spaces, and public displays of wealth. Homosocial spaces and their importance are addressed first. The vision of business as masculine established it as a homosocial space of interaction. Reports in the late 1970s of South Asian exclusion from homosocial spaces indicated that the businessmen were trying to adopt the masculinity whilst simultaneously being rejected from it.¹⁴² Further reports on attempts to engage with homosocial spaces, through the formation of South Asian clubs, asserted the businessmen's aspiration to

¹⁴⁰ Verduijn and Essers, 'Questioning Dominant Entrepreneurship', p. 614.

¹⁴¹ Connell, *Masculinities*, p. 76.

¹⁴² George Clark, 'Colour bar in Tory clubs condemned by Mrs Thatcher', *The Times*, 14 February 1977, p. 3; Michael Horsnell, 'Lord Thorneycroft to be asked to proscribe colour-bar Tory clubs', *The Times*, 15 February 1977, p. 4.

be a part of the white business masculinity. The reports also highlighted the businessmen's initial rejection and difference.¹⁴³

The second part of the chapter explores the representation of South Asian businessmen and wealth. Hegemonic British business masculinities had a heavy emphasis on performance. Displaying one's wealth was a key way to perform these masculinities. South Asian businessmen were shown using public displays of wealth to assert their masculinity, with cars such as the Mercedes Benz having become associated with the community.¹⁴⁴ As well as this, South Asian businessmen were often photographed or portrayed in the media in smart suits, a prevailing indication of seriousness and style in the workplace.¹⁴⁵ Their engagement with business fashion kept them in-line with the prevailing business masculinities of the period. However, portrayals of the businessmen in suits also insinuated that they were moving away from their own culture. As such, the media's representation of South Asian businessmen presented them as engaged with, but rejected from, business masculinities whilst they also moved away from their own diaspora. This displayed the businessmen as removed from their own heritage. The media positioned them in higher social standing than other ethnic minority communities whilst simultaneously removing them from the hegemonic masculinity of the era. Building on the inherent whiteness that the media linked to entrepreneurialism and middle-classness under Thatcher, this chapter therefore displays that this implicit whiteness was also present in the masculinities of the business world. South Asian exclusion from the masculinities thus shows that the inherent whiteness was widespread within British middle-class identities.

Whiteness and Entrepreneurial Masculinities

Entrepreneurial and business masculinities were inherently white. Karen Verduijn and Caroline Essers' identification that the words 'female' or 'ethnic' have had to be added to descriptions of entrepreneurs indicates that the career was both inherently masculine and white.¹⁴⁶ As such, descriptions and depictions of masculinities from the 1980s were outlining white business masculinities specifically. Kate Mulholland's research into businessmen in the Midlands outlines some of the key aspects of the masculinities. Although the research was conducted in the 1990s, these masculinities were products of the 1980s. Mulholland argues that wealth

¹⁴³ Amit Roy, 'Rich Asians back Tories', *Daily Mail*, 24 January 1983, p. 22.

¹⁴⁴ Aminah Mohammad-Arif, 'A Masala Identity: Young South Asian Muslims in the US', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 20.1-2 (2000), 67-87 (p.70).

¹⁴⁵ Frank Mort, *Cultures of Consumption: Commerce, Masculinities and Social Space* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 123.

¹⁴⁶ Verduijn and Essers, 'Questioning Dominant Entrepreneurship', pp. 614-615.

ownership was present in the masculinities of those she was researching and ‘financial acumen’ displayed a businessman’s success.¹⁴⁷ When interviewing one businessman, Mulholland noted that ‘Mr A’ took pride in his £1million manor house renovation, displaying the focus on wealth presentation present in the modern masculinities of the 1980s. Mr A’s focus was on presenting a lifestyle ‘which resonates with consumerism, the grand house and latest cars’ amongst other, more personal, things.¹⁴⁸ Mulholland’s research shows that displaying one’s wealth was central to the British, and therefore white, business masculinities of the 1980s. Performing the role of the wealthy businessman was one aspect to the masculinities.

Engaging with homosocial spaces was another central aspect to white masculinities of the era. The spaces formed areas in which men interacted and bonded, cementing their male identity. However, in Britain these groups were defined by race as well as gender. With Thatcherism focusing heavily on entrepreneurialism and business, as seen in Chapter 1, it was important to look at Conservative clubs as an example of homosocial spaces. The implicit whiteness of these spaces was visible through the rejection that ethnic minorities faced when trying to engage with the masculine arenas. In 1977, Conservative Party clubs appeared in the news because in some there existed colour-bars (the exclusion of non-white people).¹⁴⁹ The lack of acceptance for ethnic minorities within these clubs identified them as an explicitly white masculine space. As such, this reaffirmed the implicit whiteness present within the masculinities of the era. The presentation of South Asian businessmen engaging with these masculinities suggested that they were adopting a form of whiteness and, therefore, slowly moving away from their ethnic heritage and diaspora. Through exploring how the media represented South Asian businessmen as engaging with homosocial spaces and publicly displaying their wealth, this chapter shows that British business masculinities of the 1980s had an inherent whiteness within them. This presented ethnic minority businessmen as both excluded from Thatcherite visions of entrepreneurialism and moving away from their own diasporas.

¹⁴⁷ Mulholland, ‘Entrepreneurialism’, in *Men as Managers, Managers as Men*, ed. by Collinson and Hearn, pp. 123, 133.

¹⁴⁸ Mulholland, ‘Entrepreneurialism’, in *Men as Managers, Managers as Men*, ed. by Collinson and Hearn, pp. 135, 140.

¹⁴⁹ Francis, ‘Mrs Thatcher’s Peacock Blue Sari’, p. 279; Narinder Saroop, *The Last Indian or the Destruction of Two Cultures* (London: New European Publications, 2005), p. 140; George Clark, ‘Colour bar in Tory clubs condemned by Mrs Thatcher’, *The Times*, 14 February 1977, p. 3; Michael Horsnell, ‘Lord Thorneycroft to be asked to proscribe colour-bar Tory clubs’, *The Times*, 15 February 1977, p. 4.

Social Status and Homosocial Spaces

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, South Asian businessmen tried to gain entry and acceptance in white homosocial spaces. Conservative Party clubs were one such space which rejected the community. Although these clubs were partisan rather than gendered, in 1974 only 4.3 percent of elected MPs were women, indicating that the political sphere more broadly was a male-dominated homosocial space.¹⁵⁰ Accessing Conservative Party clubs was difficult for South Asians. Reflecting on his own experiences within the Conservative Party, Narindar Saroop, who, in 1974, was elected a Kensington and Chelsea Conservative councillor, noted that many Conservative Clubs ‘did not welcome Asian members’.¹⁵¹

In 1977, *The Times* reported on colour-bars that existed in the Party’s clubs.¹⁵² In response to the colour-bars, Thatcher was reported as saying, ‘I think the best way, always, in these matters, is to have a quiet word with those who are running the Conservative clubs’.¹⁵³ Whilst this highlighted Thatcher’s public condemnation of the racism in the party, the notion of having ‘a quiet word’ rather than taking more drastic action suggested that there would not be any significant repercussions for the exclusion of minorities from these organisations.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, clubs could reject membership without giving a reason as to why.¹⁵⁵ The soft response from Thatcher indicated that tackling minority entrance into these homosocial spaces was not a priority. *The Times*’ reporting on the exclusion of ethnic minority members from these organization indicated that links to the prevailing masculinity were tenuous for non-white males on account of their ethnicities. Thus, from before Thatcher’s time in power, homosocial groups were attempting to remain white and male. The reporting on ethnic minorities’ exclusion from these masculine spaces presented the communities as outside of masculinity. This also assigned them unspoken effeminate identities.

However, the formation of the Durbar Club in 1980 created a space for the economic and social conservative elite of the South Asian diaspora to come and engage in social activities.¹⁵⁶ The Durbar Club was founded by Saroop and was designed to be a ‘dining club’

¹⁵⁰ Richard Kelly, *Women in the House of Commons*, House of Commons Library (London, 21 August 2018), 1-15 (p. 5) <<https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06651>> [accessed 19 September 2018].

¹⁵¹ Francis, ‘Mrs Thatcher’s Peacock Blue Sari’, p. 279; Saroop, *The Last Indian*, p. 140.

¹⁵² George Clark, ‘Colour bar in Tory clubs condemned by Mrs Thatcher’, *The Times*, 14 February 1977, p. 3; Michael Horsnell, ‘Lord Thorneycroft to be asked to proscribe colour-bar Tory clubs’, *The Times*, 15 February 1977, p. 4.

¹⁵³ George Clark, ‘Colour bar in Tory clubs condemned by Mrs Thatcher’, *The Times*, 14 February 1977, p. 3.

¹⁵⁴ George Clark, ‘Colour bar in Tory clubs condemned by Mrs Thatcher’, *The Times*, 14 February 1977, p. 3.

¹⁵⁵ Michael Horsnell, ‘Lord Thorneycroft to be asked to proscribe colour-bar Tory clubs’, *The Times*, 15 February 1977, p. 4.

¹⁵⁶ Francis, ‘Mrs Thatcher’s Peacock Blue Sari’, p. 281.

which held four or five dinners a year'.¹⁵⁷ The attitude Saroop displayed towards clubs in general indicated that he saw them as male spaces to which businessmen should aspire to be connected with. Although Thatcher was the Durbar Club's Patron, this was because of her status as Prime Minister. Saroop made it clear his book, *The Last Indian*, that clubs of this kind were for men, affirming them as homosocial spaces.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, with the prominent sexism in society and lack of visibility of successful South Asian women, as well as the high membership fees, the club was likely to be male dominated environment.¹⁵⁹

In 1983, as the general election drew closer, the *Daily Mail* reported that some in the Durbar Club were supporting the Conservatives. The article presented the organisation as an 'elitist' club for wealthy South Asian businessmen and politicians, describing it as 'operating fairly secretly for about a year'.¹⁶⁰ Just like the white businessmen of Britain, the South Asians also liked to gather, have dinners and 'let [their] hair down', as Indra Sethia said in his interview with the *Daily Mail*.¹⁶¹ However, the article implied that South Asian businessmen were disconnected from the wider white business world through the existence of a separate club. The colour-bars and the formation of the Durbar Club indicated that these men were not fully integrated into the masculine world of white business in Britain. Furthermore, the reporting on the Durbar Club implicitly raised the status of South Asian businessmen whilst maintaining their otherness from white business masculinities. The Conservative-leaning paper's description of the club as secretive and elitist set a negative precedent within the report. However, the newspaper's identification that the members were Conservative presented them as in line with the *Daily Mail*'s ideology, indicating a level of acceptance.

The formation of an exclusive club with millionaire members, political power and, most importantly, luxurious social events all presented a structure similar to the stereotypes of an elitist boys' club. In this sense, the report on the gathering of wealthy South Asians in such a manner suggested a commonality between them and the white elite in Britain. Although they were practicing similar acts of homosocial engagement, the separation in the form of distinct clubs showed the businessmen's exclusion from British business masculinities. A similar experience can be seen in the formation and history of the AACS. The club 'attracted businessmen, doctors and lawyers', according to *The Times*, and expanding to 14 branches and

¹⁵⁷ Saroop, *The Last Indian*, p. 142.

¹⁵⁸ Saroop, *The Last Indian*, pp. 142, 187.

¹⁵⁹ Amit Roy, 'Rich Asians back Tories', *Daily Mail*, 24 January 1983, p. 22.

¹⁶⁰ Amit Roy, 'Rich Asians back Tories', *Daily Mail*, 24 January 1983, p. 22.

¹⁶¹ Amit Roy, 'Rich Asians back Tories', *Daily Mail*, 24 January 1983, p. 22.

1000 members by 1983.¹⁶² With the right-leaning press presenting both the Durbar Club and the AACS as forming distinct circles for South Asians, this suggested that the community was engaging with British business masculinities whilst still being excluded from the white business world.

The tension between South Asian identity and British business masculinities for South Asian businessmen was explored in the *Tandoori Nights* episode, 'The Captains and The Kings Depart'.¹⁶³ The episode followed Jimmy as he interacted with members of his golfing club. The white members told Jimmy they wanted to put him up for Captaincy. It later transpired Jimmy would act as a token candidate, rather than a viable contender. The men visited Jimmy's restaurant for dinner, during which Alaudin asked if he can join the golf club. Initially rejecting this notion, Jimmy said, 'I don't think that the situation is so desperate that we need Alaudin and the brick-laying mafia to trample the freeways of Graystones club'. However, when Jimmy learnt that he had been subject to tokenism, his tact changed. Following an interaction between himself and some club members, he asked them to leave on account of their rejection of Alaudin.¹⁶⁴ This episode showed Jimmy's character as a South Asian businessman attempting to engage with the white business masculinities of the 1980s and negotiating what that meant in relation to his links with the South Asian community. Early on, he was portrayed as part of the "the club". He engaged with the masculine acts of buying rounds, comradery and social activities that allowed him to gain access to the homosocial space, something we know was difficult for ethnic minorities in Britain. However, when the others were not in his presence there was a mutual understanding between the white men that Jimmy was an outlier. In this sense, Jimmy's character represented South Asian businessmen who were thought of as having left their culture behind. Jimmy's rejection of the club only came once he faced discrimination himself. The episode, therefore, implied that those who were a part of these homosocial spheres saw themselves as immune to the wider racism of society through their perceived engagement with the masculinities.

Engagement with British business masculinities therefore created a complex narrative for South Asian businessmen. The businessmen engaging with such identities was represented in the press and media as having left their cultural roots in favour of assimilating into whiteness. This narrative was also presented in *My Beautiful Laundrette*. Early in the film, Omar attended a gathering at Nasser's house and was greeted by two distinctly different worlds. Firstly, Omar

¹⁶² John Warden, 'Asian dilemma for the Tories', *The Times*, 4 December 1986, p. 16.

¹⁶³ 'The Captains and the Kings Depart', *Tandoori Nights*, Channel 4, 30 October 1987 [on DVD].

¹⁶⁴ 'The Captains and the Kings Depart', *Tandoori Nights*, Channel 4, 30 October 1987 [on DVD].

was introduced to his aunties. They represented the tradition of Pakistani culture with their non-western styles and traditional greetings. Although the traditionally influenced dress code was not uniform, with the younger women and children dressing in a more western fashion, a contrast developed when Omar saw the men. Nasser and the other businessmen—who were all South Asian bar two white men—were all sat in a bedroom drinking in suits and laughing as a distinctly “British” sounding track played in the background.¹⁶⁵ The contrast between the two settings, which had no boundary between them except for a brief convocation between Omar and Tania, insinuated the removal of these South Asian businessmen from their cultural heritage. The scene suggested that the businessmen had become British and moved away from their own culture through the music playing in the background and their juxtaposition with the culturally traditional women who were shown previously. In the living-room, Omar was confronted with a tension between being British and Pakistani. In the bedroom, the men’s identity was rooted in their shared business status, Conservatism and masculinity of drinking, suits and male comradery, rather than their culture.

The suggestion that these South Asian businessmen had adopted an overtly white businessmen masculinity was later cemented in a convocation between Omar and Tania. After being asked if the men had been being mean to him, Omar told Tania, ‘I think I should ‘arden myself’. A harder and aggressive masculinity was also seen in Saleem. On several occasions in the film he verbally and physically abused Omar as a form of intimidation.¹⁶⁶ Traditionally the South Asian male had been viewed as effeminate in the British psyche, a leftover thought from late nineteenth-century imperialism. As the British theorised about the new lands of the Empire, and attempted to understand them, many previously British-educated Indians became viewed in the British Imperial mind as effeminate.¹⁶⁷ Although views towards the South Asian diaspora had developed in the proceeding 100 years, recent scholarship suggests that this view of the effeminate South Asian male has remained in the popular conscious, albeit to a lesser degree. Jason Lim identifies that, for some British South and South East Asians in the 2000s, it was difficult ‘to perform an appropriate gendered and sexualized masculinity’ because they

¹⁶⁵ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD]; The music for the film is credited to Ludus Tonalis but there are no credits that indicate the music from this scene was a distinct piece of music. As such, it is assumed that it was an original for the film.

¹⁶⁶ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

¹⁶⁷ Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), pp. 119-120; Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The ‘manly Englishman’ and the ‘effeminate Bengali’ in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 4-5.

‘were often considered to be quiet and effeminate and, by implication, somehow less than fully masculine’.¹⁶⁸

The continuation of the understanding of South Asian men as inherently effeminate means that the representation of them as tough and thick-skinned in *My Beautiful Laundrette* associated them with a white British masculinity. Through the actions of drinking, male bonding, comradeship and a somewhat harder and more aggressive persona, South Asian businessmen were presented as leaving behind the effeminate masculinity they were assigned by the British communal memory. However, the adoption of a British masculinity, and white customs, simultaneously suggested that the businessmen abandoned their cultural identity. This was also emphasised through Nasser’s relationship with his mistress, Rachel (Shirley Anne Field). Nasser’s adultery epitomised his rejection of his Pakistani heritage through his desire to be with his white mistress over his culturally traditional Pakistani wife, Bilquis (Charu Bala Choksi).¹⁶⁹

The representation of South Asian businessmen as distant from their own diaspora also appeared in the *Asian Times*. In 1983, letters from readers to the newspaper indicated that South Asian businessmen were viewed as having rejected or excluded themselves from the diaspora. One letter addressed the businessmen directly, warning them that ‘you as businessmen must not think you are safe in your mansions or in your big shops’.¹⁷⁰ Later the same year, another letter criticised the businessmen for their links and engagement with the Conservatives, who were viewed as damaging and racist, saying that they were subservient ‘to their white masters’, and went on to argue that some ‘bunyas’ (‘bunyas’, or baniās, were members of the baniā caste to which merchants and traders belonged) were only out to ‘line their own pockets’.¹⁷¹ The two letters’ explicit condemnation of the businessmen for abandoning the community highlight that they were viewed by some as moving away from their cultural heritage. Although neither letter-writer rejected the businessmen’s Asian-ness, nor describe them as white, they both identified that there was a disconnect between the businessmen and the diaspora. Therefore, the letters in the *Asian Times* presented the businessmen as removed from the South Asian community.

¹⁶⁸ Jason Lim, ‘Encountering South Asian Masculinity through the Event’, in *New Geographies of Race and Racism*, ed. by Claire Dwyer and Caroline Bressey (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008), pp. 223-38 (p. 226).

¹⁶⁹ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

¹⁷⁰ Chandrakant Patel, ‘A frank message to Asian business persons’, *Asian Times*, 18 February 1983, p. 4.

¹⁷¹ Kantilal Desai, ‘Asian Tories Knocked’, *Asian Times*, 1 April 1983, p. 4; W. J. Johnson, ‘Baniā’, in *Dictionary of Hinduism* (Oxford University Press, 2009), in *Oxford Reference* <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780198610250.001.0001/acref-9780198610250-e-375>> [accessed 28 June 2018].

However, *Tandoori Nights* suggested that the businessmen's relationship with their diaspora was more complicated. This was exemplified through the fact that, although Jimmy was distant from his own community, he was never fully embraced by the white members of the golf club. As such, Jimmy encapsulated the narratives of the naïve businessman, portrayed in the *Asian Times* as seeing himself above racism, and the rejected ethnic minority. The media's representation of South Asian businessmen's engagement with British business masculinities, therefore, placed them in a complex position between being South Asian and being British. Thus, the businessmen were presented in the media as either rejecting their own community or being rejected by the white business community. This exclusion further emphasised the implicit whiteness of Britishness.

By 1990, South Asian businessmen had gained more prevalence in the business world and the press. This suggests that there was a reduction in discrimination. However, despite the progression towards a more equal society in terms of race (which was by no means a sorted issue) the business world remained a male-dominated homosocial sphere. The continuation of the masculine identity of business had consequences for South Asian businesswomen. Motu Ghosh, the founder of Different Delights, a successful food company specialising in Asian cuisine, told the *Asian Times* that the business world was still overtly masculine:

"It is still a man's world," she says. "Men doing business are harder on businesswomen than on men. I don't think men would chase me up for immediate cash payments if I was a man."¹⁷²

Ghosh's awareness of gender difference in the business world in 1990 indicates that, despite changes, the space remained a masculine environment. The male-ness of entrepreneurialism continued in the mainstream press as well. Ghosh, seemingly a popular example of female South Asian entrepreneurialism, was reported on in the *Guardian*. She stated that the branch manager became less helpful following an initial £2000 overdraft from the bank. The newspaper reported that Ghosh believed this was because she was a woman and that the bank manager lacked faith in her ability because of this.¹⁷³ This sentiment was reiterated again in an article from the *Daily Mail* which claimed that, as well as the bank, some of Ghosh's 'friends and relatives were unsupportive' as well.¹⁷⁴ Certainly, there are limited examples of the press

¹⁷² Prasanna Probyn, 'Motu Ghosh's small scale success', *Asian Times*, 20 March 1990, p. 21.

¹⁷³ Rosemary Collins, 'Bank managers should be told: the bottom line is not colour or sex but success in business', *Guardian*, 5 February 1990, p. 13.

¹⁷⁴ Michael Streeter, 'Struggles and Triumphs of Ethnic Entrepreneurs', *Daily Mail*, 2 February 1990, p. 21.

reporting on South Asian businesswomen, identifying that the business-world continued to be presented as a masculine arena.

The media's representation of South Asian businessmen, and the white business community in Britain rejecting them, sent mixed messages about their masculinity. The portrayal of the businessmen mimicking the white business community, and aspiring to be accepted into the homosocial spaces of the white business elite, resulted in depictions of them in the media as abandoning their cultural roots. The presentation of South Asian businessmen in this light was less explicit in the papers, but more so on the screen. However, despite their efforts to engage with the business masculinities in Britain through entry to homosocial spaces, their ethnicity made this difficult. As such, the South Asian businessmen were also presented in the media as not fully embodying the business masculinities of the period. Although this image was not directly effeminate, the rejection from homosocial spaces that were viewed as overtly masculine suggested the continuation of the colonial notion that South Asian men were less masculine than their British counterparts, even if this idea was slowly reducing as it had been up till this point.

Displays of Wealth

Although South Asian businessmen sought to engage with homosocial spaces, being part of "the Club" was not the only way in which they asserted their masculinity. Contemporary research from Robin Ward, Susan Nowikowski and Ron Sims identified the importance of wealth to the South Asian community, arguing that gaining such economic capital allowed them to avoid discrimination they would otherwise have faced.¹⁷⁵ Displays of wealth were a way in which the wider business community showed to others that they were masculine. Even before the Thatcher years, Stuart Hall *et al* identified that the middle-classes were focused on wealth creation for both the individual and their family.¹⁷⁶ The expression of wealth became more integral to business masculinities as Thatcherite individualism gained momentum. Mulholland has noted that '[t]he masculine character of wealth ownership' was clearly displayed in her interviews from the 1990s.¹⁷⁷ This affirmed that a link between displaying one's wealth and business masculinities had developed and been cemented throughout the

¹⁷⁵ Ward, Nowikowski, and Sims, 'Middle Class Asians', in *Migrant Workers in Metropolitan Cities*, ed. by Solomons, p. 167.

¹⁷⁶ Stuart Hall and others, *Policing the Crisis*, p. 142.

¹⁷⁷ Mulholland, 'Entrepreneurialism', in *Men as Managers, Managers as Men*, ed. by Collinson and Hearn, p. 123.

Thatcher years. Throughout the period, then, wealth was central to the masculinity of businessmen.

One way the media portrayed South Asian businessmen as conforming to the new business masculinities was through their dress. By the 1980s, a culture of consumption had developed in Britain. Frank Mort identifies that this consumption had become an important aspect of new masculinities, with a focus on '[c]onsumer journalism, clothing, toiletries, together with a plethora of other personal objects'.¹⁷⁸ The emergence of the 'new man' was thus part of this new culture and was an 'icon of commercial masculinity'.¹⁷⁹ The suit became the symbol of the modern businessmen and stood for seriousness in the work-place. It also maintained an element of style which was important to the consumerist tendencies of the era.¹⁸⁰ Suits represented shared values and expressed conformity amongst the emerging professionalized managers.¹⁸¹ The emergence of this uniform meant that suits not only represented a career, but the masculinity associated with businessmen. However, whereas the business-class in Britain was largely middle-class, suits were not. Anne Hollander argues that '[t]he strong, simple forms of modern design, [...] were perceived as naturally masculine'.¹⁸² Furthermore, Tim Edwards notes that the context in which a suit was worn could alter the meaning and connotations associated with it.¹⁸³ Although the suit was the uniform for businessmen, it also translated a person's supposed success.¹⁸⁴ The influence suits had beyond the middle-classes meant that they stood for a broader masculinity. Suits were therefore associated with a wider understanding of masculinity in Britain as displaying strength and power. The suit also suggested a Britishness and, potentially, whiteness about a person.

In the years running up to, and including, Thatcher's time in power, South Asian men and clothing mainly entered the media when it concerned cultural and religious dress. 1975 saw protests from Sikhs because of new rules on wearing helmets on motorcycles. This brought the issue of cultural and religious clothing into the public sphere.¹⁸⁵ In 1979, the debate re-emerged when Kulbinder Singh Bhamra, an 11-year-old Sikh schoolboy, was told he had to

¹⁷⁸ Mort, *Cultures of Consumption*, p. 204.

¹⁷⁹ Mort, *Cultures of Consumption*, p. 8.

¹⁸⁰ Mort, *Cultures of Consumption*, p. 123.

¹⁸¹ R.W. Connell and Julian Wood, 'Globalization and Business Masculinities', *Men and Masculinities*, 7.4 (2005), 347-64 (p. 353).

¹⁸² Anne Hollander, *Sex and Suits: The Evolution of Modern Dress* (Brinkworth, Wilts: Claridge Press, 1994), p. 7.

¹⁸³ Tim Edwards, *Men in the Mirror: Men's Fashion, Masculinity and Consumer Society* (London: Cassell, 1997), pp. 9-10.

¹⁸⁴ Mort, *Cultures of Consumption*, p. 123.

¹⁸⁵ 'Sikhs defy the law in helmet protest', *Birmingham Post*, 2 June 1975, p. 1.

remove his turban in order to attend Grove Junior School in Wolverhampton. One report from the *Birmingham Post* identified that Mr Rhoden, the head-teacher, had ‘an MBE for running a successful multi-racial school’.¹⁸⁶ Although the article juxtaposed this fact with the banning of the turban, the identification of social prestige indicated that, for some who held such positions, different forms of cultural dress were not viewed as appropriate. In November 1979, the *Observer* reported that Generation Restaurants denied entry to a Sikh man because he refused to remove his turban in line with the company’s no hat policy. This reasserted that social elites valued South Asian religious dress less than their own standards.¹⁸⁷ In 1982, another school case emerged involving Park Grove private school in Birmingham and Gurinder Singh Mandla. The case went to the Appeals Court where it was ruled in favour of the head-teacher. In the report, it was noted that the school had ‘five Sikh pupils who had abandoned turbans’.¹⁸⁸

These cases did not go unnoticed by the public. One reader of the *Birmingham Post* wrote in to note that the Army had allowed turbans, arguing, ‘what is good enough for the Army, [...] should be good enough for Mr. Audley Dowell-Lee’ (the headmaster at Park Grove).¹⁸⁹ In these cases, the wearing of a turban was viewed as unacceptable or not in keeping with the held custom. These incidents identified that there was a notion of British and non-British dress codes, which added another layer to the meaning of suits. With the suit’s links to business and respectability, wearing it stated that a person was British and engaging with a specifically British masculinity, especially as all other cultural markers were removed.

In many cases, South Asian businessmen were depicted in suits. In the profiles in the *Asian Times*, many of the men had photographs of themselves dressed in the businessman’s armour of choice. In 1989, one business feature saw Mike Visram, a businessman whose company specialised in ‘equipment for the wood industry’, photographed wearing a suit and sitting down in a leather chair. The other three members of ‘The Forester Board’ stood behind him (figure 2.1). All four men personified ‘the power look’ of the 1980s in broad-shouldered suits. This look, according to Edwards, was designed to assert one’s masculinity and remove any ‘soft-focus effeminacy’.¹⁹⁰ Earlier profiles set the same precedent. Nisar Mir, a businessman who sold equipment for oil fields, was described as ‘a statuesque figure dressed

¹⁸⁶ Ross Reyburn, ‘School bans Sikh for wearing turban’, *Birmingham Post*, 3 May 1979, p. 1.

¹⁸⁷ ‘Turbans ban is fought’, *Observer*, 25 November 1979, p. 5.

¹⁸⁸ Stephen Cook, ‘Denning bows out with Sikh ruling’, *Guardian*, 30 July 1982, pp. 1, 22 (p. 22).

¹⁸⁹ Andrew Capcy, ‘Turbans are acceptable’, *Birmingham Post*, 5 August 1982, p. 4.

¹⁹⁰ Prasanna Probyn, ‘The success story of Mike Visram’, *Asian Times*, 20 January 1989, p. 22; Edwards, *Men*, p. 21.

in a Mafir-style darksuit [*sic*]' (figure 2.2).¹⁹¹ Similarly, K.D. Patel's profile saw him dressed in an all-white suit and tie combo with a dark shirt and sat in a grand floral-patterned chair (figure 2.3).¹⁹² Images of South Asian businessmen in suits were not confined to the *Asian Times*. Nazmu Virani stands out as a notable example in mainstream newspapers. Virani

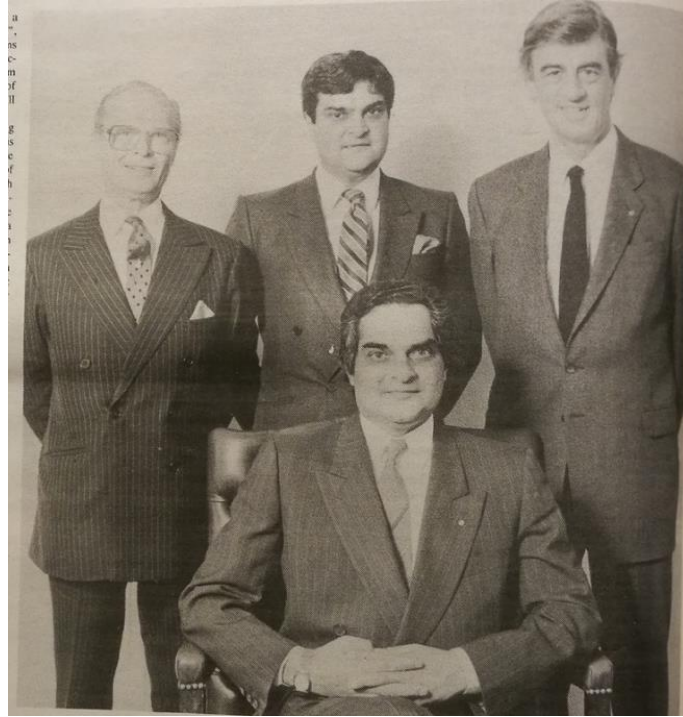


Figure 2.1: The Forestor Board (From left): Managing Director Iqbal Visram, Independent Director The Rt. Hon. Earl of Bathurst, DL, Chair Mike Visram and Independent Director Lewin Lewin [*sic*] Chapman The Forestor Board (Standing, from left): Independent Director The Rt.Hon.Earl Bathurst, DL, Managing Director Iqbal Visram and Independent Director Lewin Chapman. The Chair, Mike Visram, is seated., in Prasanna Probyn, 'The success story of Mike Visram', *Asian Times*, 20 January 1989, p. 22.

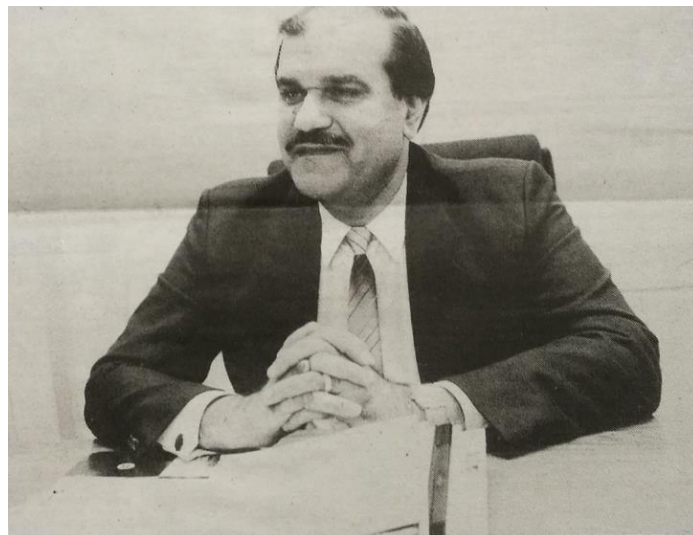


Figure 2.2: Nisar Mir in his office, in Sushma Puri, 'The Mini-Empire of Nisar Mir', *Asian Times*, 30 August 1985, p. 18.

¹⁹¹ Sushma Puri, 'The Mini-Empire of Nisar Mir' *Asian Times*, 30 August 1985, p. 18.

¹⁹² Amal Ramtohl, 'The rise of the Asian business in Wembley', *Asian Times*, 21 August 1987, p. 22.



Figure 2.3: K D Patel – From “Rags to Riches”, in Amal Ramtohol, ‘The rise of the Asian business in Wembley’, *Asian Times*, 21 August 1987, p. 22.

epitomised business masculinity when he was photographed. He was always in a suit and, sometimes, sat behind a desk or on a luxurious sofa (figure 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9).¹⁹³ Furthermore, these suits were well-fitted examples of the ‘strong, simple forms of modern design’ which stood for white British masculinity.¹⁹⁴

Although some religious and cultural dress, such as turbans for Sikh men, was present within the South Asian diaspora, noticeable identifiers were not widespread for men. As such, the newspaper articles presenting the men in their suits may not have suggested to the South Asian diaspora that these men were shifting away from their culture in the same way that other aspects of the business masculinities did. However, when the presentation of the common dress-codes of high-powered male and female South Asians is compared, the differences tell a more complex story. Women in the business industry tended to wear overtly traditional clothing or be in businesses which were more closely associated with their diasporic roots. In an article in the *Asian Times* advertising Pathak’s goods, Meena Pathak was pictured in

¹⁹³ ‘Rafiq Mughal and Geoffrey Gibbs, ‘The millionaires Amin threw out founded an empire’, *Guardian*, 4 January 1984, p. 14; Derek Harris, ‘Two views of British Islam from the inside: the entrepreneur and the police officer’, *The Times*, 18 August 1987, p. 8; ‘Virani group in black’, *The Times*, 3 June 1988, p. 27; Cliff Feltham, ‘Virani is poised to expand his £300m business empire’, *The Times*, 1 August 1988, p. 19; Cliff Feltham, ‘Virani back three years after stake sale’, *The Times*, 29 December 1988, p. 21; See Appendix 1 for figure 2.6 – 2.10.

¹⁹⁴ Hollander, *Sex and Suits*, p. 7.

traditional clothing with the company's products (figure 2.11).¹⁹⁵ Similarly, an article discussing Shreela Flather, a Conservative Councillor, was accompanied by a photograph of her dressed in traditional clothing (figure 2.12).¹⁹⁶ Despite the logic of Meena Pathak portraying a traditional culture, as that was the focus of the marketing for the sauces, the fact remained that high profile South Asian women had to use their culture as a selling point. On the other hand, South Asian businessmen dressed in culturally neutral ways which indicated to the diaspora their shift away from their heritage.

This differentiation continued into the 1990s. The *Daily Mail* drew distinctions between South Asians whom they considered British and those whom they did not. In an article on powerful South Asian women, the *Daily Mail* challenged their Asian-ness with the headline, 'Clever, talented and successful. But not 'true' Asian women'. The article reinforced gendered and racialized stereotypes, stating that the women '[move] with ease between the suit and the sari, [whilst] they retain a wonderfully soft aura of femininity, but possess wills of iron'.¹⁹⁷ The linking of the Sari with the femininity of the South Asian community and the suit with hard iron wills and a more serious business aura asserted that suits remained an image of masculinity, business, seriousness and Britishness. It also suggested that when people reverted back to their cultural clothing, they stepped back from the hard business masculinities they embodied in suits. Although for women this contrast may have been more noticeable, the distinction reinforced the idea that South Asian culture was markedly un-British.

Reports showing South Asian businessmen in suits, then, suggested an active engagement with the business masculinities of Thatcherite Britain. The uniformity the clothing represented in the business community meant that, when South Asian businessmen were pictured following suit, they too were presented as engaging with business masculinities. However, these British, Thatcherite and business masculinities were all implicitly white. The fact that many South Asian businessmen were photographed in suits in the media, juxtaposed against women who wore more traditional clothing (or risked being told they were no longer Asian), suggested that South Asian men were presented as moving away from their culture.

The press' presentation of South Asian businessmen in suits suggested that they wanted to be seen as wealthy figures. The businessmen also used cars as an indication of their status.

¹⁹⁵ 'Pathak's – A shining light in the world of Indian cuisine', *Asian Times*, 25 November 1988, p. 17; See Appendix 1 for figure 2.11.

¹⁹⁶ Stefano Cagnoni, 'Tory Mayor in 'racist police' row', *Asian Times*, 29 August 1986, p. 3; See Appendix 1 for figure 2.12.

¹⁹⁷ Jessica Davies, 'Clever, talented and successful. But not 'true' Asian women', *Femail Magazine*, *Daily Mail*, 17 October 1991, pp. 27-9 (pp. 27-8).

In 1974, the *Birmingham Post* reported that foreign made cars were ‘a sign of class’ in Britain. In a similar way to that of home ownership and the prevailing masculinity rooted in consumption, owning a car was an indicator that a person was middle-class and masculine.¹⁹⁸ In both *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *Tandoori Nights* the emphasis that the South Asian community put on cars was visible. In one episode of *Tandoori Nights*, Jimmy’s niece, Sweetie (Sneh Gupta), came to visit from India and no effort was spared to make a good impression. Jimmy hired a Mercedes to drive them around in and, later in the episode, the South Asian businessman who owned the car hire company was also seen driving one.¹⁹⁹ Similarly, in *My Beautiful Laundrette*, Omar’s transition into becoming a Thatcherite businessman could be seen as having started with the car he was gifted by Nasser.²⁰⁰ In both examples, the car was used as a status symbol. The car translated to the world that these were potentially wealthy businessmen. Even though owning a car was not necessarily an indicator that people were businessmen, the desire to have cars that were viewed as well-respected brands indicates this was part of the masculinity. Similar to the shift in focus on where houses were owned, over the ownership itself, it was not the ownership of a motorcar that made someone masculine, but which car a person owned.

Newspapers also displayed the use of material goods as status symbols. To their own diaspora in particular, the South Asian businessmen presented a masculinity in line with the white businessmen of the day. The profile on Mir noted that ‘[t]he modest offices are off-set by the new, white Mercedes standing gleaming outside’.²⁰¹ Although the article stated that the business’s offices were relatively boring, the identification of the Mercedes, and accompanying photograph (figure 2.4), highlighted that this was an important display of Mir’s wealth. To add to this, the article also mentioned that ‘the solid oak table [stood] as a psychological barrier’ as he talked to the reporter.²⁰² These items displayed the white business masculinity of the era. The corresponding photographs provided a visual medium for Mir to be presented as performing the masculinity. The article’s identification of Mir’s new Mercedes and imposing hard-wood desk indicated that, through the possessions, he was saying that he was in business, he was to be taken seriously, and that he was the *man* to deal with. All these things implied a

¹⁹⁸ ‘Foreign car ‘A sign of class’’, *Birmingham Post*, 28 January 1974, p. 7.

¹⁹⁹ ‘Welcome Home Sweetie’, *Tandoori Nights*, Channel 4, 16 October 1987 [on DVD].

²⁰⁰ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

²⁰¹ Sushma Puri, ‘The Mini-Empire of Nisar Mir’, *Asian Times*, 30 August 1985, p. 18.

²⁰² Sushma Puri, ‘The Mini-Empire of Nisar Mir’, *Asian Times*, 30 August 1985, p. 18.



Figure 2.4: With car and newly- built [sic] premises, in Sushma Puri, 'The Mini-Empire of Nisar Mir', *Asian Times*, 30 August 1985, p. 18.

command of wealth that linked him back to the white masculinity expressed by others in the 1980s.²⁰³

Similarly, the *Daily Mail*'s 1989 series on Britain's Muslim community also pictured several high-powered businessmen. The article linked to masculinity more explicitly, with the headline reading, 'Macho world of the devout capitalists'. A photograph of five South Asian businessmen saw them all dressed in suits and leaning on three saloon cars (figure 2.5).²⁰⁴ Once again, the performance through the cars suggested a control of wealth, asserting the white business masculinity of the period. The accompanying photograph again provided a way for the readers to visualise the wealth. This created a firm link between the South Asian businessmen and their performance of business masculinities through their public display of wealth. The article itself dealt with this directly, saying that '[t]heir world is traditional, predominantly masculine' and '[t]hey are the New Traditionalists, Muslims who personify so much that was once thought 'typically British''.²⁰⁵ This created a direct association between the South Asian businessmen and white masculinity of Britain, linking them to an imagined image

²⁰³ Mulholland, 'Entrepreneurialism', in *Men as Managers, Managers as Men*, ed. by Collinson and Hearn, p. 123.

²⁰⁴ Graham Turner, 'Macho world of the devout capitalists', *Daily Mail*, 7 February 1989, pp. 20-21.

²⁰⁵ Graham Turner, 'Macho world of the devout capitalists', *Daily Mail*, 7 February 1989, pp. 20-21 (p.20).



Figure 2.5: Brian Boulton, *Self-made men*: From left, Akmal Khushi (clothes), Yacoub Ali (cash and carry), Mohammed Sarwar (food), Tarak Ramzan (clothes) and Iqbal Moborik (sports goods), in Graham Turner, 'Macho world of the devout capitalists', *Daily Mail*, 7 February 1989, pp. 20-21.

of a traditional businessman. In this way, the article made connections between white and South Asian businessmen.

Despite this, the report also set these businessmen up as anomalies within their community:

A great many first-generation Muslim immigrants, however, are no different from first-generation settlers in America or Australia in the sense that their hearts and a good deal of their money are elsewhere. Many better-off Pakistanis, for example, have built splendid houses back home in the fond hope that they or their children will one day return.²⁰⁶

Through identifying the businessmen as different to the wider Muslim diaspora, and the engagement with the traditional masculinities of British businessmen, the South Asian—in this case Muslim—business community was presented as British through their embracing of white British masculinity. However, the article insinuated this was at the loss of their own cultural identity. The businessmen were distanced from their religious diaspora. This created a

²⁰⁶ Graham Turner, 'Macho world of the devout capitalists', *Daily Mail*, 7 February 1989, pp. 20-21 (p. 21).

separation between the “British” Muslims, who engaged with the business masculinities of the era, and the “Pakistani” Muslims who, the article implied, were uncommitted to Britain.²⁰⁷

Whilst the *Daily Mail* promoted the notion that these men were engaging with the masculinities of white British businessmen, the impression from other papers was less positive. The *Guardian*’s previously discussed 1982 challenge to the successful South Asian stereotype counteracted the image of success and fortune. The articles, which looked at Clapham’s high street and South Asian businesses, removed links between elite white businessmen of the period and the South Asian businessmen through the focus on the those who worked long hours in their shops for little economic reward.²⁰⁸ In doing so, South Asian businessmen were presented by the newspaper as being in a position where they were unable to live in luxury and, by extension, engage with a masculinity centred on the command of wealth.²⁰⁹ Rather than associate the businessmen in a positive way to Thatcherite notions of hard work, the article disassociated South Asian businessmen from the stereotype of the successful South Asian through its focus on those in small business. This also distanced the community from the masculine persona that the elite amongst them were attempting to portray. With only the highly successful South Asian businessmen seemingly being allowed limited access to the identities of entrepreneurialism and success, being granted these identities was as much about performing them correctly as it was being a successful entrepreneur.

Conclusion: Between two worlds

The media’s presentation of South Asian businessmen as encapsulating and engaging with a wider business masculinity sent a complex message. The businessmen were shown to engage with the masculinities linked with the white business community. However, the media’s reporting on persistent attempts to distance the community from white business masculinities, through the rejection of the businessmen from homosocial spaces, removed South Asian businessmen from masculine identities. Conversely, the businessmen’s own engagement with these structures also contributed to them being criticised by their own diaspora for supposedly abandoning their community. The way the media presented South Asian businessmen as

²⁰⁷ Graham Turner, ‘Macho world of the devout capitalists’, *Daily Mail*, 7 February 1989, pp. 20-21.

²⁰⁸ Polly Toynbee, ‘Asian traders buy wisely, work long hours, and see their efforts rewarded with big profits. Or do they? There are few bonanzas in Clapham High Street...’, *Guardian*, 17 September 1982, p. 12; ‘Asian success story ‘an illusion’’, *Guardian*, 9 September 1982, p. 3.

²⁰⁹ Polly Toynbee, ‘Asian traders buy wisely, work long hours, and see their efforts rewarded with big profits. Or do they? There are few bonanzas in Clapham High Street...’, *Guardian*, 17 September 1982, p. 12.

holding wealth presented a similar narrative which linked them to white business masculinities of the era and removed them from their diaspora.

The media's representation of these businessmen, therefore, presented them as being held in tension between a South Asian identity and the identity as businessmen in Britain. Their engagement in the masculinities of the wider business community distanced them from their own diaspora, whilst at the same time they were not fully accepted into the white business community itself. They were continually identified as outliers, be it in homosocial spaces or within their own community. The presentation of South Asian businessmen in suits and with cars displayed they engaged with the consumptive masculinity. However, this did not guarantee acceptance. Furthermore, fashion contributed to the idea that South Asian businessmen had become removed from their own community. Although suits in themselves had some ethnic neutrality, the juxtaposition with high-profile female South Asians and the unspoken meanings of the suit as masculine and British led to the wearing of one suggesting a disconnect between the businessmen and the diaspora. South Asian businessmen were therefore presented by the media as neither fully South Asian nor full masculine as businessmen. The continued exclusion of South Asian businessmen from homosocial spaces and masculine identities reinforced colonial narratives and positioned the businessmen as removed from their own community whilst being rejected from the white business world. This simultaneously identified British, Thatcherite and business masculinities as inherently white, reaffirming the wider link between Britishness and whiteness in the Thatcher years.

Chapter 3: Black South Asians?

In 1988, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) decided that the Asian diaspora was to have its own ethnic classification. This was after a disrupted year which began with Asian Probation workers boycotting a diversity exercise because of their classification as black. Asians would no longer be referred to as black.²¹⁰ The shift away from blackness, for the South Asian community, was a process which developed throughout the 1980s. Although, in 1990, the language of blackness was still present in newspapers, there was a marked increase in the use of language which identified the South Asian diaspora as Asian.

The transition from a homogenised black identity was visible in representations of South Asian businessmen and the wider community. Up until the 1980s, non-white diasporas were largely identified as black. Newspapers employed the language of blackness to discuss and address ethnic minority communities. However, influenced by the growth in representation of South Asian businessmen, the South Asian diaspora gained a reputation as being a successful minority. This perceived success generally focused on business, fulfilling a Thatcherite vision of middle-classness, although newspapers did not focus exclusively on this area. In conjunction with this, newspapers began to adopt a more nuanced language for ethnic minority communities. This was especially true when looking at South Asian businessmen. As has already been discussed, representations of South Asian businessmen in the media had separated them from both their own diaspora and Thatcherite visions of middle-classness and entrepreneurialism, which were both implicitly white.

The social position of the businessmen changed the way in which they and their wider community were discussed as the exclusion from both identities developed. A more nuanced identity beyond blackness advanced and ethnic minority experiences were coming to be seen as plural. However, this shift saw the development of comparisons and hierarchies within representations of ethnic minority communities. As South Asian communities were portrayed as business-orientated and economically successful, a view of the black community (Afro-Caribbean and African) as unsuccessful simultaneously developed. This was due to the continuous use of comparisons between the South Asian and black communities within the media. Although the media varied in how it addressed difference between the two communities, the identification of South Asians as the successful minority encouraged more accepting and

²¹⁰ Modood, *Not Easy Being British*, p. 29.

open portrayals of them whilst simultaneously rejecting the black community from narratives of success.

As the 1980s drew to a close the use of South Asian stereotypes remained as a way to define and remove the black community from notions of Britishness. With entrepreneurialism, business masculinities and Thatcherite middle-classness developing into pseudonyms for Britishness, the connection between South Asian businessmen and these principles and careers meant that they were sometimes portrayed in the media as distinctly more British than other ethnic minorities. However, as has been shown, individual South Asians were unable to achieve British status despite the presentation of them as engaging with these “British” ideals. In this final chapter, the shift from political blackness for South Asians is explored. Beginning with the community more broadly, this chapter looks at how the language of blackness was beginning to change in the early 1980s and suggests that there was a shift from this homogenised narrative. Following this, the South Asian businessmen are addressed more directly as their representation in the media grew. Analysing the language used to discuss these figures, it will be shown that they were beginning to be used as a benchmark by which to measure the black community’s economic success. They were also used to distance the black community from notions of Britishness. Finally, the continued identification of South Asian businessmen, and the diaspora, as economically successful is explored to understand how this developed as a way to remove the black community from Britishness and, therefore, maintain Britishness as a pseudonym for whiteness.

The Beginnings of Disunity

In the early years of Thatcher’s Britain the term “black” was still synonymous with anyone non-white. Early reports on issues facing Britain’s minority communities homogenised them under the banner of blackness. In 1980, when the *Guardian* reported on the Home Office’s failure to reappoint ‘the five members of the Commission for Racial Equality who were dropped’, the headline read ‘CRE faces boycott by black community’. It was reported that West Indians were told by ‘the West Indian Standing Conference’ that ‘if any of them were approached to join the commission they should refuse in protest’. However, the article confused its own language of political blackness, noting that Shreela Flather and one ‘Dr Farrukh Hashmi, a Pakistani with long experience in the race field’ had both agreed to join the commission.²¹¹ Was the article including Flather and Hashmi as part of the black identity? This

²¹¹ Lindsay Mackie, ‘CRE faces boycott by black community’, *Guardian*, 6 May 1980, p. 2.

confusion immediately addresses the bias towards the African and Afro-Caribbean diasporas that the language of blackness held.²¹² Although the headline stated that the black community was boycotting the CRE the report suggested that it was only the West Indian community that was doing so. Whilst the article identified Hashmi as Pakistani, later articles from the *Guardian* affirm that the paper used 'black' as an identity for all minorities. A report from July 1980, that looked at unemployment amongst the Asian population, stated Bradford councillor Mohammed Ajeeb wanted 'a unified and conscious black civil rights movement in Britain'.²¹³ Although, in both articles, South Asians were looked at either specifically, or identified by their ethnicity, the reference to them as black meant they were still considered a part of a wider ethnic minority identity.

Whereas the *Guardian* employed the language of political blackness as a positive unifying force, the *Daily Mail* rejected it in certain instances. A comment piece from 1981 directly compared the Asian and black communities. In the comment, reference was made to the 'striking difference in attainment between [the] two ethnic groups' in schools. The article then went on to reject racism as the reason for this, arguing that 'these types of discrimination would tell almost equally against Asians as against blacks'.²¹⁴ The direct comparison between South Asians and the black community suggested several different ideas. Firstly, the comment identified a higher attainment rate in schools, stating 'that 20 per cent. of Asians achieved an O-level pass in mathematics, compared with only 5 per cent. of West Indians'.²¹⁵ This suggested that the experience between the two communities was different, challenging the homogenised narratives from the left-leaning *Guardian*. However, through the rejection of racism as the reason for lower attainment from the black community, claiming it was 'the propaganda of the race relations industry', the comment suggested that there was an underlying difference between South Asians and the black community.²¹⁶ This, in turn, encouraged further racist attitudes towards the black community.

Paul Gilroy indicated that, by 1980, the black community in Britain was viewed in a negative light. Gilroy noted that violent protests in 1977 and 1979, and the protection of criminality by black gangs, gave the whole black community a reputation as alien aggressors.²¹⁷ This view was reinforced by the 1981 riots. Whilst Gilroy has noted only a maximum of '33

²¹² Modood, 'Political Blackness', p. 863.

²¹³ Philip Jordan and Lindsay Mackie, 'Growing militancy in the pit of disillusion', *Guardian*, 1 July 1980, p. 19.

²¹⁴ 'Comparing blacks and Asians', *Daily Mail*, 12 June 1981, p. 12.

²¹⁵ 'Comparing blacks and Asians', *Daily Mail*, 12 June 1981, p. 12.

²¹⁶ 'Comparing blacks and Asians', *Daily Mail*, 12 June 1981, p. 12.

²¹⁷ Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black*, pp. 124-5.

per cent [...] of those arrested in 1981 were ‘non-white’’, the riots were constructed in popular memory as race riots.²¹⁸ Although Gilroy’s use of blackness incorporated South Asians, the *Daily Mail*’s separation of the black and South Asian communities suggested they were presented and viewed as increasingly separate within some public thought. Within the broader context of a poor public image that had developed in the late 1970s, this critique of the black community added another layer to the removal of them from narratives of Britishness, with the first associating the community with crime.²¹⁹

Although, in this example, the *Daily Mail* did not employ political blackness, the language of blackness was used as an identifier for ethnic minority communities by the paper right up to 1990.²²⁰ The difference between the two publications came in how they discussed the communities. Referencing Ajeeb’s call for black unity, the left-leaning *Guardian* followed a line similar to that of the CCCS in that there was unity between ethnic minority communities because of the discrimination they faced. According to the CCCS, the black and Asian diasporas were unified through their alienness and otherness which further homogenised ethnic minority experiences under the banner of blackness.²²¹ Although the right-wing *Daily Mail* did not deny that racism was a problem for both South Asian and black communities, the comment was written in such a way which suggested difference and a potential superiority of the South Asian community based upon their higher academic achievement.

The praise given to the South Asian community for high achievement, and the suggestion that this differentiated them from other ethnic minorities, is reminiscent of themes seen in Chapter 1. Stuart Hall *et al* identified that success had previously been linked with notions of Britishness and middle-classness. Chris Moores and Frank Mort identify these aspects more specifically with Thatcherism, with Mort highlighting that, for Conservative governments, success, and appearing as such, was vital.²²² The *Daily Mail* used academic success within the South Asian diaspora to distance the black community through the rejection of racism as the primary driver of difference. With its success-orientated mindset, the article displayed how dominant Thatcherite themes of success were used to distance certain minority communities from acceptance in British society. This has previously been identified within academic research. Arun Kundnani has written that the *Daily Mail*’s use of successful minority

²¹⁸ Gilroy, *There Ain’t No Black*, p. 26.

²¹⁹ Gilroy, *There Ain’t No Black*, pp. 124-5.

²²⁰ Francis Hardy, ‘Britain’s Black Bourgeoisie’, *Daily Mail*, 29 June 1990, pp. 20-21.

²²¹ Hall and others, *Policing the Crisis*, pp. 46-7, 159.

²²² Hall and others, *Policing the Crisis*, p. 139; Moores, ‘Thatcher’s Troops?’, p. 231; Mort, *Cultures of Consumption*, p. 123.

figures was employed in order to other less successful members of the communities. According to Kundnani, these examples were the exceptions that were used to provide evidence for meritocracy.²²³ This narrative that Kundnani presents can be seen clearly within the *Daily Mail* article. However, rather than individuals being used, it was the South Asian community that were employed to other black diasporas. As such, the right-leaning press began to promote difference along lines of what they perceived as success.

Representations of South Asian businessmen had a similar effect even when political blackness was still widely employed. This was not confined to the right. Despite the *Guardian*'s adherence to political blackness, some articles promoted difference. One article, which raised questions around the number of black businessmen, both promoted a hegemonic identity of blackness and also showed differing experiences for South Asian and black businessmen. The article identified that there was a 'lack of business and commercial enterprises among Black people, especially those with West Indian origins'.²²⁴ The positioning of the West Indian community as a sub-category of the black identity suggested that it represented a wider group of people. However, when the article discussed success rates for securing funding it was noted 'that 74 per cent of Afro Caribbeans had failed to get a start-up loan from their High Street banks, compared with 13 per cent of Asians and 6 per cent of whites'.²²⁵ Highlighting this difference drew attention to the fact that South Asian businessmen were more successful in securing the necessary economic capital to start businesses, thus suggesting they were a more business-orientated community. As such, the *Guardian* article presented a similar narrative to that of the *Daily Mail* through highlighting the higher success rate that South Asian businessmen were able to achieve.

The Times was another paper which highlighted difference between the South Asian and black communities, albeit in a more direct manner. In 1982, one article acknowledged that comparison between the diasporas existed, stating that, '[i]t [had] been customary for some years to contrast the position of the Asian communities in Britain with that of the black community'.²²⁶ Although the article did not begin by describing South Asians in a favourable light, saying that '[m]any Asians speak English only with difficulty, if at all, whereas most blacks speak it as their first language', it went on to be more positive:

²²³ Kundnani, "'Stumbling on'", p. 7.

²²⁴ Michael Smith and Rafiq Mughal, 'How come there are so few Black businessmen?', *Guardian*, 3 August 1982, p. 17.

²²⁵ Michael Smith and Rafiq Mughal, 'How come there are so few Black businessmen?', *Guardian*, 3 August 1982, p. 17.

²²⁶ 'The Tensions of British Asians', *The Times*, 28 June 1982, p. 11.

They are more highly motivated to get a good education; they work hard; and they are eager for prosperity, often combining with each other in family businesses or other joint endeavours'.²²⁷

The article suggested that whereas the South Asian community was focused on education and prosperity, the black community was not. In a similar way to the *Daily Mail*, this was not explicitly said in the article. Instead, it was insinuated in the report through identifying difference between “black” communities and then praising the traits of the South Asian diaspora. Furthermore, *The Times* article went on to discuss the supposed assimilation of young South Asians into Britishness, claiming a reduction in chauvinism within the community was ‘the influence of British life’.²²⁸ This connected South Asians with notions of Britishness. The fact that the *Daily Mail* and *The Times* focused more explicitly on comparing the South Asian and black levels of success identified the newspapers’ commitment to the Thatcherite ideology. Although the *Guardian* also compared the communities this was within a broader article on discrimination, highlighting the differing focus of the left- and right-leaning press of the period.

Across these articles, the comparison between South Asians and the black community set a complex precedent for the following years. At this point, no newspaper rejected the notion of political blackness. However, through identifying the South Asian community as having a distinct experience, newspapers suggested that a homogenised view of Britain’s ethnic minorities was an incorrect understanding of minority experiences. Furthermore, when these two communities were compared, the focus was often on the success of South Asians in comparison to the black community. With Thatcherism’s focus on economic success and business, highlighting this within the South Asian community presented them as engaging with Thatcherite notions of the middle-classes whilst also distancing the black community from these identities. The seemingly active engagement from sections of the South Asian community presented a narrative of integration, upwards mobility and engagement with society. With these aspects encapsulating elements of Thatcherism, this representation drew links between the South Asian community and the ideology whilst questioning the black community’s status as “British”, hinting that Britishness and blackness were distinctly different.

The New Benchmark

As the 1980s progressed, the media representations of South Asian businessmen suggested they were neither fully accepted into a white British identity or their own community. Critical letters

²²⁷ ‘The Tensions of British Asians’, *The Times*, 28 June 1982, p. 11.

²²⁸ ‘The Tensions of British Asians’, *The Times*, 28 June 1982, p. 11.

to the *Asian Times*, which implored South Asian businessmen to invest in the paper, stated that '[o]f all the black communities in this country we are the most threatened and vulnerable'.²²⁹ The use of political blackness illustrated that there were some in the South Asian community who embraced the identity. However, the letter also insinuated the businessmen saw themselves as detached from their diaspora, telling them, 'you as businessmen must not think you are safe'.²³⁰ This suggested that the businessmen were removed from the identity of political blackness as well. Blackness itself was partly rooted in a shared experience of discrimination.²³¹ However, the paper itself did not remove wealthy South Asians from the identity. When reporting on a supposed rejection of J.K. Gohel's, a 'leading Asian Tory', attempt 'to become Britain's first black High Commissioner to India', the *Asian Times* clearly and unequivocally identified Gohel as black.²³² Although Gohel denied asking for the position, the article made the claim that he faced discrimination from Thatcher in an attempt to 'keep her diplomatic service spotlessly white'.²³³ Despite Gohel's denial of the situation, the article's insistence on its own chain of events inserted Gohel into a narrative of discrimination, further allowing the paper to identify him as black, despite his prestige and social standing, and therefore affirm the opposing Britishness under Thatcher as distinctly white.

Although the *Asian Times* seemingly identified all South Asians as black, in the wider press there was a more complex use of language as the decade progressed. Newspapers across the political spectrum were identifying South Asian businessmen in more specific terms. Nazmu Virani again stood as an example. 'Ugandan Asian', and 'Asian' were two common identities ascribed to Virani in the *Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*.²³⁴ Although this more nuanced language was not necessarily new, the consistency with which it was beginning to be used suggested a slow shift towards identifying difference between South Asian businessmen and their black counterparts. As has been discussed in Chapter 1, nationality being mentioned was not an unusual occurrence. The language identifying Virani's Asianness or Ugandan origins was not, therefore, a direct attempt to challenge political blackness. What these articles did do was promote the stereotype of the successful South Asian. In doing so, the articles identified South Asians specifically, if indirectly, as the successful minority.

²²⁹ Chandrakant Patel, 'A frank message to Asian business persons', *Asian Times*, 18 February 1983, p. 4.

²³⁰ Chandrakant Patel, 'A frank message to Asian business persons', *Asian Times*, 18 February 1983, p. 4.

²³¹ Modood, 'Political Blackness', p. 865.

²³² 'Maggie snubs Asian Tory', *Asian Times*, 19 August 1983, p. 1.

²³³ 'Maggie snubs Asian Tory', *Asian Times*, 19 August 1983, p. 1.

²³⁴ Rafiq Mughal (ed.), 'Company Briefing', *Guardian*, 12 November 1983, p. 17; Christopher Fields, 'Home loan pea under Chancellor's thimble', *Daily Mail*, 12 November 1983, p. 29; Michael Foster, 'Market Report', *Daily Mail*, 19 November 1983, p. 29; Geoffrey Gibbs, 'Virani's brewery move', *Guardian*, 24 December 1983, p. 22.

However, the newspapers also suggested Virani was not British through identifying his Asian-ness. This placed him in a position which both denied a politically black, and British, identity. This continued in another article from 1983. Virani was identified by the *Daily Mail* as a wealthy exile from Uganda. The article also said the family belonged to ‘Aga Khan’s Ismaili cult’. The report went on to identify that much of the money for their businesses came from the Ismaili or Ugandan Asian community.²³⁵ As such, the article cautiously acknowledged Virani and his family as engaging with upwards social mobility and entrepreneurial business ideas. This presented Virani and the community as in a position which suggested they engaged with Thatcherite elements of middle-classness and business. Nevertheless, the report simultaneously kept the family at arm’s length by identifying that they were Islamic. The use of the word ‘cult’ added a sense of danger and threat to British beliefs that Sudbury identifies as part of how minorities were viewed in the post-war era.²³⁶ However, the *Daily Mail* did not use ‘cult’ in any regular way to describe Virani.²³⁷ The newspaper later used him as an exemplary figure, suggesting that the Virani family became more acceptable to the *Daily Mail*. The general acknowledgement of the success of South Asian businessmen, combined with the overt identification of them as having non-white ethnicities, built up a complex picture of South Asians being the successful minority but also not fully integrated with Britishness.

The building of the successful minority stereotype also identified the South Asian diaspora as different from the black community. South Asians were continuously presented as the exception to the ethnic minority experience. Newspapers began to be more explicit about the differences between ethnic minorities. In 1985, the *Guardian* ran an article discussing research from Aston University which ‘found that 79 per cent of ethnic minority businesses are Asian owned, with the Chinese coming next and the Afro-Caribbeans coming a poor third – owning only 3 per cent of ethnic businesses’.²³⁸ The use of the terms ‘ethnic minority’ and ‘black and Asian’, rather than black, displayed a move within the press to a more nuanced language when discussing ethnic minority communities.²³⁹ This suggested a shift away from political blackness, specifically in this case for South Asian diaspora, and towards the understanding that homogenised minority narratives were overly simplistic.

²³⁵ Michael Foster, ‘Amin exiles by BR hotels’, *Daily Mail*, 8 March 1983, p. 28.

²³⁶ Sudbury, ‘(Re)Constructing’, pp. 32-3.

²³⁷ Michael Foster, ‘Amin exiles by BR hotels’, *Daily Mail*, 8 March 1983, p. 28.

²³⁸ Arlen Harris, ‘Major growth in minority business’, *Guardian*, 22 October 1985, p. 23.

²³⁹ Arlen Harris, ‘Major growth in minority business’, *Guardian*, 22 October 1985, p. 23.

The article also identified that the West Midlands clothing industry was ‘dominated by Asian entrepreneurs. Asian clothing bosses now employ up to 15,000 people’, with over 500 South Asian clothing firms existing.²⁴⁰ The high success rate of the South Asian community within business combined with reporting that they ‘dominated’ the clothes industry reaffirmed a public narrative of economic success.²⁴¹ The article therefore presented South Asians as holding a unique experience of success within wider ethnic minority communities. This contributed to the stereotype of South Asians as being successful in business. Equally, this representation of the businessmen highlighted the supposedly growing gap between South Asians and the black community, distancing South Asian businessmen from political blackness and the black community from narratives of success. This reiterated the black community’s growing portrayal as othered from Thatcherite ideals.

Another 1985 article from the *Guardian* also drew distinctions between black and South Asian businessmen. However, more pronounced differences based upon success within the business world were presented. Although it was identified that South Asian business had a high stake in ‘low reward, high effort’ industries, such as newsagents, the article still highlighted their superior success-rate by comparison to the African and Afro-Caribbean community.²⁴² Furthermore, the report also claimed,

Afro-Caribbean business operators, unlike the Asians who had a history of business experience and strong family and community channels of assistance, had all the disadvantages of an alien community without the intermediary mechanisms and business history that were important to survival.²⁴³

Through identifying the South Asian community as more successful and holding more business acumen, the *Guardian* created a narrative of low-level engagement with Thatcherite ideals around business for South Asian businessmen. The article also distanced the black community from these traits. This had two effects. Firstly, it associated South Asian businessmen with an ideology that was becoming synonymous with whiteness. Equally, the continued connection between South Asians and Thatcherite notions of middle-classness and business, and therefore whiteness, reaffirmed the identity of the Afro-Caribbean community as alien, other and different through positioning South Asian businessmen as the accepted community.

²⁴⁰ Arlen Harris, ‘Major growth in minority business’, *Guardian*, 22 October 1985, p. 23.

²⁴¹ Arlen Harris, ‘Major growth in minority business’, *Guardian*, 22 October 1985, p. 23.

²⁴² Clive Woodcock, ‘Risk takers more likely to fail’, *Guardian*, 26 July 1985, p. 20.

²⁴³ Clive Woodcock, ‘Risk takers more likely to fail’, *Guardian*, 26 July 1985, p. 20.

The *Observer* also began to move from political blackness in reports discussing South Asian businessmen. One article, looking at minority representation in the stock exchange, was headlined ‘Only black with a share in the Stock Exchange’ and focused on the experience and success of Bernard Isagba, a British-Nigerian.²⁴⁴ The report identified the South Asian and black diasporas as distinctly different, noting that ‘only a handful of Asians work on the floor of the Stock Exchange and Mr Isagba is the only African or Afro-Caribbean dealer’.²⁴⁵ Whilst this article did not promote the standard stereotype of the successful South Asian by comparison to their black colleagues, the separation of the minority communities suggests that they were coming to be seen as distinct.

The distance between Thatcherism and the black community was created by the press on both the left and the right. A report in the *Daily Mail* noted that Nicholas Fairbairn, a Conservative MP, was criticised for saying that ‘the Afro-Caribbeans are lazy’ when compared to the South Asian diaspora. He was complaining about a Government scheme designed to assist black business. However, the key to this criticism was rooted in the fact that Fairbairn was critical because, in his opinion, the scheme supported “‘lazy” West Indians at the expense of “diligent” Asians’.²⁴⁶ This brazen attack by the Conservative MP indicated that South Asians were increasingly being viewed as a distinct minority group: one which was upwardly mobile and business minded. The criticism also indicated that, through this identification, other communities were held up to South Asian businessmen. In this way, division was being suggested and the South Asian business community was becoming the new Thatcherite benchmark by which ethnic minorities were being measured.

Both *Tandoori Nights* and *My Beautiful Laundrette* addressed the issue of division between the South Asian and black communities. In both productions, South Asian characters set a precedent through their portrayal as fulfilling the stereotype of Thatcherite businessmen. In one episode of *Tandoori Nights*, Bubbly (Shelley King), Jimmy’s daughter who worked as a lawyer at the local Asian advice centre, was attempting to run a meeting between Mr Desai (Minoo Govala), a local South Asian businessman, and a youth leader (Burt Caesar) from the local African and Afro-Caribbean community.²⁴⁷ An argument emerged about whether Mr Desai, and other South Asian businessmen, should join in criticism of the police. Desai rejected the notion and proceeded to argue with Bubby and the local youth leader, accusing the black

²⁴⁴ Martin Bailey, ‘Only black with a share in the stock exchange’, *Observer*, 21 September 1986, p. 7.

²⁴⁵ Martin Bailey, ‘Only black with a share in the stock exchange’, *Observer*, 21 September 1986, p. 7.

²⁴⁶ ‘Lazy’ West Indians storm’, *Daily Mail*, 28 September 1985, p. 2.

²⁴⁷ ‘Far From the Ganges’, *Tandoori Nights*, Channel 4, 25 July 1985 [on DVD].

youth of stealing from the shops. When Bubby challenged him on this, saying, 'Black people should not talk to each other like that', Desai responded with, 'Why should I be called black? All blacks are not together'.²⁴⁸ This interaction between the distinctly business orientated Mr Desai and the Afro-Caribbean youth leader suggested both a class difference and a difference in identity for the two communities. The scene indicated that whereas some more left-wing members of the South Asian community, such as Bubbly, identified as black, the business community rejected this notion.

A similar tension was explored in *My Beautiful Laundrette*. During the scene where Nasser and Johnny removed a poor Afro-Caribbean man from his residence in Nasser's building, a contrast was set up between the highly successful Nasser, dressed in a suit, and the Afro-Caribbean squatter desperate to keep his room. Nasser's later comment to Johnny that, 'I'm a professional businessman not a professional Pakistani. And there is no question of race in the new enterprise culture', showed that he saw himself as removed from the racial discrimination that minorities faced in Britain.²⁴⁹ This, by extension, removed Nasser from minority experiences. With the film exploring ideas that South Asian businessmen were removed from their cultural heritage and community, this extension to wider ethnic minority communities indicated that the businessmen were also removed from political blackness. Instead, the film depicted the businessmen as choosing what they saw as an ethnically neutral position.

The notions of differing experiences between the South Asian and African and Afro-Caribbean communities became more common through the middle of the 1980s. The use of more nuanced language within newspapers suggested a shift away from political blackness and, therefore, a homogenised view of Britain's ethnic minority communities. This understanding of differing experiences was also expressed through the identification and praise of South Asian businessmen for their economic success. However, this established a dichotomy which saw the status quo encouraging a view of South Asians as successful and the African and Afro-Caribbean community as failing in business. With business' strong links to Thatcherite visions of middle-classness, and some newly emerging views on national identity, this also associated South Asian businessmen with notions of Britishness whilst disassociating the Afro-Caribbean and African communities. As such, South Asian businessmen were represented as the stick by which other minorities were measured. As the decade progressed, and South Asian

²⁴⁸ 'Far From the Ganges', *Tandoori Nights*, Channel 4, 25 July 1985 [on DVD].

²⁴⁹ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

businessmen became more established within Thatcherite Britain, the use of this community to other wider British ethnic minorities became more pronounced.

A New Identity?

By 1988, the use of political blackness as an identity for the South Asian community was one which held contention. In December 1988, the CRE stopped using black as an overarching terminology for British ethnic minorities. The Asian identity was no longer to be considered a sub-division of blackness, but its own stand-alone identity.²⁵⁰ This decision was praised by some within the South Asian community. In a letter to the *Asian Times*, from the Asian Peoples' National Assembly, the letter-writer expressed joy at the new legal definition, saying that 'this is an important victory for all Asians and for our acceptance in Britain on our own terms'.²⁵¹ However, the letter also noted that there was still work to be done, stating;

We now look to all local and central government departments, all public bodies and all other organisations who monitor equal opportunities policies to follow the lead of the CRE.²⁵²

Although the CRE's move away from political blackness was acknowledged as only the first step of the solution, the fact that the central government body embraced the move indicates that this was no small change.

The press' identification of South Asians as a separate minority was becoming more pronounced in the months running up to the CRE's decision. In October 1988, the *Daily Mail* reported on the new *Asian Directory and Who's Who*, a book by Jasbir Sachar which amalgamated information on significant South Asian people, both in and outside of business, into one publication.²⁵³ The identification of Asian immigrants as '[t]he hard-working immigrants from Asia', and the book as 'a new chapter in their success story', reinforced the stereotype of the economically successful South Asian. This further suggested that they alone were the immigrant community who, across their diaspora, were committed to Thatcherite ideas of business.²⁵⁴ This added to the representation of South Asians as separated from the experience of the black community, as downtrodden and at the bottom of the social ladder, further connecting them with Thatcherite visions of Britishness and business success.

²⁵⁰ Modood, *Not Easy Being British*, p. 29.

²⁵¹ 'Official classification of Asians', *Asian Times*, 16 December 1988, p. 6.

²⁵² 'Official classification of Asians', *Asian Times*, 16 December 1988, p. 6.

²⁵³ 'Asians mean business in book of fame', *Daily Mail*, 22 October 1988, p. 12; J.S. Sachar, *Asian Directory & Who's Who International*, 3rd edn 1987-88 (Illford: Asian Observer, 1987).

²⁵⁴ 'Asians mean business in book of fame', *Daily Mail*, 22 October 1988, p. 12.

Throughout the 1980s, the *Daily Mail* had been more antagonistic towards the black community. In 1989, a comment piece drew very distinct lines between the South Asian and black communities. Expressing sympathy and, to an extent, support for the South Asian community, the piece led with:

It gives the Daily Mail no pleasure to record the results, analysed according to racial group, of a statistical survey of the crimes committed in the London Metropolitan area. The main findings are that that a disproportionate number of the victims of violent robbery and theft are Asian and a disproportionate number of the offenders are black. Asians, it should also be said, commit fewer crimes in relation to their numbers than any other group.²⁵⁵

This opening displayed sympathy towards the South Asian community because of the high rate of crime against them. Equally, through the identification of the offenders being black, the comment piece immediately drew a distinction between the communities. The comment set the two communities against each other. On the one hand, there were the business orientated and hard-working South Asians, and on the other were the, in this case, criminal black community.

The comment piece noted that ‘[t]he report stresses that in any ethnic category only a very small percentage of its members are guilty of such crimes’, somewhat reducing the association between the black community and crime. However, it then went on to say that

That is all the more reason why the great majority of blacks who are law-abiding must see it as their responsibility – as the Asians do – to control the minority of offenders who let down and damage the repute of the whole community.²⁵⁶

This epitomised the way in which South Asians were used to distance the black community from notions of Britishness in Thatcherite Britain. The *Daily Mail* distanced the African and Afro-Caribbean community from Thatcherite notions of active citizenship through comparing them to the South Asian diaspora and laying the blame for a, supposedly, high crime rate amongst the black community at their feet. Furthermore, through the claim that this was already done by the South Asian community, the paper used the diaspora as a benchmark by which other minorities could be measured and, in this case, rejected from notions of Britishness. As such, the South Asian community were becoming the exceptions that Kundnani argued the *Daily Mail* used to prove Thatcherism, as well as critique other minority communities.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁵ ‘Race and Crime’, *Daily Mail*, 11 March 1989, p. 6.

²⁵⁶ ‘Race and Crime’, *Daily Mail*, 11 March 1989, p. 6.

²⁵⁷ Kundnani, “‘Stumbling on’”, p. 7.

Despite the use of the South Asian community to distance other minorities from notions of Britishness, the *Daily Mail* appeared to shy away from identifying the South Asians as British. This set up a duality of identities for the community that can be seen across the media. There was an implicit suggestion in the media that the South Asians were becoming British through linking them to Thatcherite visions of middle-classness. However, Modood has pointed out that British, in itself, was ‘a quasi-ethnic term’ which excluded minority communities because of its close association with whiteness.²⁵⁸ As such, the comment piece was able to distance the black community from Britishness, through the comparison of them to the South Asian community, whilst simultaneously excluding South Asians from British identities through the use of language.

By the end of the period there had been a shift towards a more nuanced language to identify both South Asian businessmen, and the wider community, with the term “ethnic” replacing “black” as the nation’s new universal identifier for the non-white community. In 1990, the *Guardian* published an article on minority businesses which ran under the sub-heading ‘Ethnic Enterprise’ and referred to ‘ethnic business’.²⁵⁹ However, the *Daily Mail* published a two-page spread on ‘Britain’s Black Bourgeoisie’, which included a mix of South Asian and black business people.²⁶⁰ Through the continuation of blackness as a universal term by the *Daily Mail*, the article somewhat re-homogenised the experience of ethnic minority business people, although it did explore each of their stories on a more individual basis.²⁶¹ What was seen more visibly in this article was an explicit use of economically successful people as the benchmarks for ethnic minority communities in Britain. This suggested the *Daily Mail* moved away from using ethnicity as a unifying factor and instead focused on class, with people from both the South Asian and black communities being held up as examples. Although the South Asian community had been used by the media as the benchmark for ethnic minorities for much of the time under Thatcher, this article suggested a potential shift towards using class to sow seeds of aspiration and division amongst minority communities in Britain.

Conclusion: Stuck in the Middle

As the Thatcher years drew to a close the press continued to homogenised minority communities into groups and distance them from notions of Britishness. However, the media’s

²⁵⁸ Modood, *Not Easy Being British*, p. 5.

²⁵⁹ Martyn Halsall, ‘When racism bars the way to business’, *Guardian*, 5 March 1990, p. 14.

²⁶⁰ Francis Hardy, ‘Britain’s Black Bourgeoisie’, *Daily Mail*, 26 June 1990, pp. 20-21.

²⁶¹ Francis Hardy, ‘Britain’s Black Bourgeoisie’, *Daily Mail*, 26 June 1990, pp. 20-21.

increased identification of South Asian businessmen as Asian encouraged an understanding of the community as having a different experience to the African and Afro-Caribbean community in Britain, although the language of political blackness had not completely disappeared. This had both positive and negative effects. The increased nuance meant that a greater understanding of South Asian businessmen's overall situation developed, often resulting in praise. Whereas the left-wing *Guardian* often focused on exploring why this was happening, the right-leaning *Daily Mail* tended to use the new identification of South Asians as the successful minority to further push the black community away. In doing so, the paper reasserted connections between Britishness and whiteness. However, South Asian businessmen and wider community were not identified as British. The press on the left and right of the political spectrum reported on minority experiences for very different reasons. Although there were articles associating South Asian businessmen, and their wider community, with Thatcherism, the lack of explicit identification of them as British indicated that they were still considered outsiders. This uncomfortable middle-ground which the media positioned South Asian businessmen in meant that they, and their diaspora, were sometimes held up as examples whilst they were also removed from British identities. In this way, the move from political blackness in representations of both South Asian businessmen, and the wider diaspora, enabled a more nuanced understanding of ethnic minority experiences in Britain. This simultaneously allowed the right-leaning media to maintain a Thatcherite vision of Britishness as exclusively white.

Conclusion: ‘no question of race in the new enterprise culture’?²⁶²

Between 1979 and 1990 the British media underwent a noticeable shift in how it approached and presented South Asian businessmen. Whereas at the start of the period newspapers removed South Asians from their own narratives of discrimination, by 1990 the businessmen and their diaspora were having special reports and extended pieces being published on them.²⁶³ Although the community was, to some degree, associated with Thatcherite visions of middle-classness, they were always held at arm’s length. Be it in their ability to buy houses, the acceptance of the South Asian businessmen as being active citizens or their reputation as *men* of business, this unique group in society were left in a position of identity limbo. They were praised by some for their engagement with the new Thatcherite ideology that was emerging and yet they were not fully embraced. Their engagement with Thatcherite ideals of middle-classness and business also suggested that they were somewhat removed from their own diaspora. This middle position that South Asian businessmen occupied also allowed them to be used by the media to distance the black community from notions of economic success in the public eye. These representations of South Asian businessmen thus reaffirmed narratives of whiteness as inherently linked to Britishness.

The media also identified that ethnic minority community members were excluded from homosocial spaces within the business world, suggesting that, as a result, they were viewed as less masculine because of their failure to engage with the homosocial world of clubs. This also affirmed Thatcherite business masculinities as white. However, the representation of South Asian businessmen engaging with the prevailing business masculinities associated them with whiteness. This portrayal left the businessmen open to criticism which introduced tensions between them and their diaspora. South Asian businessmen’s exclusion from social clubs and homosocial spaces meant that they were presented as not white enough to gain acceptance by the white business community as masculine, yet in attempting to do so were also represented as subservient to whiteness and removed from their own communities.

With South Asian businessmen presented as resting uneasily in this position, their representation in the media in relation to Britain’s other ethnic minority communities became

²⁶² *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

²⁶³ Aubrey Chalmers, ‘The right to discuss your new neighbours’ *Daily Mail*, 19 January 1980, p. 11; Sally Coetzee, ‘Neighbours face court over sale to Asians’, *Birmingham Post*, 13 May 1980, p. 3; ‘Couple ‘pestered’ over selling house to Asians’, *Daily Mail*, 16 May 1980, p. 9; ‘Neighbours ‘didn’t want Asians’’, *Guardian*, 17 May 1980, p. 5; ‘Man who didn’t want Asian family as neighbours’, *Daily Mail*, 17 May 1980, p. 9; Graham Turner, ‘Macho world of the devout capitalists’, *Daily Mail*, 7 February 1989, pp. 20-21; Jessica Davies, ‘Clever, talented and successful. But not ‘true’ Asian women’, *Femail Magazine*, *Daily Mail*, 17 October 1991, pp. 27-9.

more complex. The shift away from political blackness in the media meant that South Asian businessmen were more readily identified as Asian rather than black, although political blackness had not disappeared by 1990. The combination of their own identity as Asian and the developing stereotype of South Asians as successful led to their position being compared with that of the British black community. As a result, the South Asian businessmen, and to some extent the wider diaspora, were positioned in a more prosperous position by newspapers. With this, South Asian businessmen became a benchmark by which other minorities were measured. The comparisons that were drawn between the South Asian and black communities in Britain, therefore, meant that African and Afro-Caribbean community members were removed from association with success, business and, by extension, Thatcherism and Britishness. Although they themselves were being used to distance other ethnic minority communities from Britishness, South Asian businessmen still lacked the identity themselves. In this way, representations of South Asian businessmen removed both the black community and their own diaspora from narratives of Britishness. Although South Asian businessmen were praised by the media, and somewhat elevated above other minority communities in Britain, their constant exclusion from British identities affirmed Modood's claim that Britishness was a pseudonym for whiteness.²⁶⁴

More work needs to be done by historians to understand the histories of Britain's ethnic minority communities as not only telling their story, but also contributing to a fuller understanding of Britain's past, present and future. From the South Asian community alone, there are sources which need more exploration. The *Asian Times*, *Eastern Eye* and *Libas Magazine* were all productions which have a lot to offer historians in understanding the developing culture of British South Asians and their perspectives on life in Britain in the late Twentieth Century.²⁶⁵ Through this understanding of their experience and perspectives, historians can gain insight into British life from a new vantage point. As such, minority communities need to have their narratives written into broader histories of Britain. Through doing this, a greater understanding of both their own experience and wider British history can develop. Historians need to write histories of class, gender, and other social constructs with racialized narratives informing them. South Asian businessmen have a lot to offer these narratives, but further exploration is needed, especially exploring South Asian women's positions in society and how these gender relationships interacted.

²⁶⁴ Modood, *Not Easy Being British*, p. 5.

²⁶⁵ *Asian Times* (London); *Libas International* (London); *Eastern Eye* (London).

With South Asian businessmen's representation informing British society beyond their own diaspora, and encouraging notions of Britishness being inherently linked to whiteness, Uncle Nasser's statement to Johnny falls short of the truth. Whilst, for some, the praise and success of South Asian businessmen may have suggested that there was 'no question of race in the new enterprise culture', the businessmen's eventual representation as being disconnected from their own diaspora, and rejected from Thatcherite visions of middle-classness and business, encouraged a view of Thatcherism and Britishness as white.²⁶⁶ Deborah Phillips and Philip Sarre previously identified that British culture aimed to keep the middle-classes white.²⁶⁷ With South Asian businessmen being excluded from a full identity as British, yet being praised for their engagement with Thatcherite ideals, their representation in the media allowed the continuation of a narrative of Britishness as an exclusively and unequivocally white identity.

²⁶⁶ *My Beautiful Laundrette*, dir. Stephen Frears (Film Four, 1985) [on DVD].

²⁶⁷ Phillips and Sarre, 'Black Middle-class', in *Social Change and the Middle Classes*, ed. by Butler and Savage, p. 91.

Appendix 1



Figure 2.6: Martin Argles, Zul, Nazmo [sic], Silo and their inspiration, in Rafiq Mughal and Geoffrey Gibbs, 'The millionaires Amin threw out founded an empire', Guardian, 4 January 1984, p. 14.



*Figure 2.7: Duncan Baxter, Nazmu calling: with brother Zul and a portrait of the Aga Khan, in Derek Harris, 'Two views of British Islam from the inside: the entrepreneur and the police officer', *The Times*, 18 August 1987, p. 8.*



Figure 2.8: Encouraging start to the year: Nazmu Virani, in 'Virani group in black', The Times, 3 June 1988, p. 27.



Figure 2.9: Mark Pepper, *Family dynasty: Nazmu Virani, chairman of the expanding Control Securities, at his headquarters in Victoria, central London*, in Cliff Feltham, 'Virani is poised to expand his £300m business empire', *The Times*, 1 August 1988, p. 19.



Figure 2.10: James Morgan, 'Best deal' since his arrival in Britain: Nazmu Virani, head of Control Securities, announcing the acquisition yesterday, in Cliff Feltham, 'Virani back three years after stake sale', *The Times*, 29 December 1988, p.21.



Figure 2.11: Meena Pathak with her products, in 'Pathak's – A shining light in the world of Indian cuisine', Asian Times, 25 November 1988, p. 17.



Figure 2.12: Mayor of the Royal borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Cllr Shreela Flather, in Stefano Cagnoni, 'Tory Mayor in 'racist police' row', Asian Times, 29 August 1986, p. 3.

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Daily Mail (London)*

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Guardian (London)*

Libas International (London)

New Society (London)*

Observer (London)*

The Times (London)*

**The Times*, *Daily Mail*, *New Society*, *Guardian* and *Observer* all have digital archives which can be found at:

Daily Mail Historical Archive 1896-2004:

<http://find.galegroup.com/dmha/start.do?prodId=DMHA&userGroupName=univbri&finalAuth=true>

The Times Digital Archive 1785-2012:

<http://find.galegroup.com/ttda/start.do?prodId=TTDA&userGroupName=univbri>

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Guardian and The Observer:

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